

THE PRACTICE OF THE CURE OF SOULS
IN SEVENTEENTH CENTURY ENGLISH PURITANISM

by

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PREFACE

This study began several years ago, during my first pastorate, as a search for a deeper understanding of the meaning of the cure of souls. It was then suggested to me, that such meaning was to be found in present day pastoral psychology. I spent several years doing graduate study in this field, and although it was rewarding, it was not completely satisfying. I acquired considerable knowledge concerning the psychology of pastoral care, and I gained valuable insight into the role of the pastor with his people; but I learned little of the theology of pastoral work, and I was seldom reminded that my relationship to others must always be interpreted by my relationship to God. Mindful of the deficiencies inherent in psychology and psychiatry, I turned for help to my own Reformation heritage. I met Richard Baxter for the first time, and I became convinced that seventeenth century English Puritanism might be a fruitful period for investigation. I saw at once that they practiced a cure of souls which was rooted in Biblical theology and Reformed Calvinism. I felt that those who actually practiced a cure of souls, and ^{those} whose aims and purposes were not dissimilar from my own, would prove more helpful tutors than those who only described the practice. In the succeeding pages I have presented these men and their practice. This study stands, I trust, upon its own feet, and asks to be read as a contribution to the better understanding of seventeenth century

Puritanism; but it is also offered as a contribution to the Church's present appraisal of its cure of souls.

Such a study could not have been made without the guidance, generosity and kindness of many. In particular, I am very grateful for the patient help of Miss Barrie, Miss E.R. Leslie, M.A., and the Reverend J.A. Lamb, D.D., of the New College Library, and Mr. Robert Christie and Mr. Ian Thompson of the University of Edinburgh Library staff, for the use of the facilities of the British Museum, the Dr. Williams's Library, London, the Bodleian Library, Oxford, the Emmanuel College Library, Cambridge, the John Rylands Library, Manchester, and the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh. I am under obligation to the Reverend Principal Charles S. Duthie, D.D., and the Reverend Geoffrey F. Nuttall, D.D., who so kindly helped me during the initial stages of my research. I owe a deep debt of appreciation to the Very Reverend Principal J.H.S. Burleigh, D.D., and the Reverend William S. Tindal, D.D., my advisors, for their invaluable inspiration, criticisms and suggestions. Finally, I would also like to record my indebtedness to my parents, whose nurture brought me to Christian maturity, my wife's parents, who encouraged and made possible this study, and my wife, who throughout the entire period of this study ministered to me demonstrating the same faithful devotion that Margaret showed Richard Baxter.

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The following abbreviations are used for works to which frequent reference is made: -

C.R. - Calamy Revised, ed. A.G. Matthews.

D.N.B. - Dictionary of National Biography, ed. Sir L. Stephen and Sir S. Lee.

R.B. - Reliquiae Baxterianae, ed. Matthew Sylvester (quoted by part and section).

S.T.C. - A Short-Title Catalogue, 1475-1640, compiled by A.W. Pollard and G.R. Redgrave.

Short-Title Catalogue, 1641-1700, compiled by Donald Wing.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

Recent studies of Puritanism have done much to alter traditional misunderstandings of it and to banish certain misconceptions about it.¹ The task, however, is not finished. One aspect of Puritanism long considered deserving of further investigation is its practice of the cure of souls.² The purpose of this study was to examine that practice. It involved four minor problems: (1) to define the Puritan understanding of conscience; (2) to show how pastors instructed the conscience; (3) to further show how they counselled and resolved those troubled and disturbed in conscience; and (4) to evaluate this practice and draw conclusions therefrom.

Need for this Study

There have been several recent studies in this field, most notably John T. McNeill's "Casuistry in the Puritan Age," Religion in Life (1943) and A History of the Cure of Souls (1951), Thomas Wood's English Casuistical Divinity During the Seventeenth Century

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1. See especially: Joseph Crouch, Puritanism and Art (1910), Horton Davies, "A Vindication of the Puritans," The Congregational Quarterly (1943), Perry Miller, The New England Mind, 2 vols. (1939, 1953), Perry Miller and Thomas H. Johnson, The Puritans (1938), Percy Scholes, The Puritans and Music in England and New England (1934) and Alan Simpson, Puritanism in Old and New England (1955).
 2. Twenty years ago, John T. McNeill, in "Personal Counselling in Early Protestantism," Christendom, lamented that there existed "no adequate study of this development." pp.364-375.

(1952),¹ and Norman K. Clifford's "Casuistical Divinity in English Puritanism During the Seventeenth Century: Its Origins, Development and Significance" (1957).² As these titles imply, all three authors stress the casuistical nature of Puritan moral theology; McNeill demonstrates its affinity to Scottish Presbyterianism;³ Wood links three of its most important exponents, Perkins, Ames and Baxter, with Anglican contemporaries in a study of the moral education of seventeenth century England; and Clifford attempts a survey of its history, theology and development. But not one of these writers really treats of the Puritan practice of the cure of souls.

A further instance of the need for such a study is to be found in the friendship presently existing between theology and psychiatry. The clergy, particularly the American Protestant clergy, have of late adopted both the vocabulary and some of the practices of modern psychiatry to implement their practice of the cure of souls. Many have neglected their own traditions and theology for what they consider to be a better way. Principal Greeves's recent reflection on this phenomenon is quite apropos:⁴

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1. Wood promised two more books on the subject, English Casuistical Divinity During the Seventeenth Century, and its Relations with Medieval and Jesuit Casuistry and Selections from the Works of the Seventeenth Century English Casuists, but they have not yet made their appearance.
 2. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, New College, London University.
 3. It is just at this point that an important criticism needs to be made of his A History of the Cure of Souls. He has suggested, by treating English Puritanism and Scottish Presbyterianism together, that the practice of the cure of souls was the same in both, and further, that the main element in that practice was the exercise of discipline. As regards English Puritanism, nothing is further from the truth.
 4. Frederic Greeves, Theology and the Cure of Souls. p. 18f.

In the United States (so far as my opportunities for observation and reading permit a generalization) the situation is rather different. I was impressed wherever I travelled in that country by the fact that people still think of the minister as a 'counsellor'. Even to visit the church office of an American minister is to be reminded of the professional character of the pastor's work. Am I wrong in thinking that the problem which faces ministers in North America is that they are primarily consulted as psychologists? ... When people turn to the ministry for counsel, that is a matter for gladness; but what if they turn for psychological rather than for spiritual counsel?... I think that many thoughtful Christians in the United States are recognizing that there are deficiencies in their form of the cure of souls, even if those deficiencies differ from ours.

It is important then, not as an indictment against psychiatry but in an attempt to recapture some of the heritage of our rich past, that the practice of the cure of souls within all branches of historic Protestantism be investigated; this will correct our drift and direct our course.¹

It is hoped that this present thesis may partially fill the void left by existing studies and also provide stimulus to further investigations of Puritanism's, Protestantism's and all Christendom's practice of the cure of souls.

Definitions

The description of pastoral care as "the cure of souls" is as old as pastoral care itself; it is a term for which no alternative is readily available, in spite of the fact that it is susceptible of false interpretation. Each word, therefore, must be looked at in turn. The word "cure", from the Latin cura means "care" or "spiritual charge".² "It is readily applied,"

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1. It was for just this reason that Charles F. Kemp, in 1948, published his popular treatment of Richard Baxter's Kidderminster ministry, A Pastoral Triumph.
 2. James A.H. Murray, Editor, A New English Dictionary (1893 edn.), Vol. II, "cure".

writes McNeill,¹ "either to the tasks involved in the care of a person or thing, or to the mental experience of carefulness or solicitude concerning its object. Occasionally the former direction of meaning is further specialized to signify 'healing', or the means by which healing is effected." It is generally accepted that the German word Seelsorge best conveys the manifold meaning of "cure", for it contains both the idea of "care" as well as the thought of "healing". The Puritan pastors, however, many of whom practiced medicine as well as being spiritual physicians, saw their pastoral responsibility as primarily one of care. They would have been in complete agreement with this advice of Bernard to the clergy of Rome:²

Noli diffidere: curam exigeris, non curationem. Denique audisti, Curam illius habe;³ et non cura, vel sana illud. Verum dixit quidam: 'Non est in medico semper relevetur ut aeger.'⁴ At melius propone de tuis tibi. Paulus loquitur: Plus omnibus laboravi.⁵ Non ait: Plus omnibus profui, aut plus omnibus fructificavi, verbum insolens religiosissime vitans. Alias autem noverat, homo quem docuit Deus, quia unusquisque secundum suum laborem accipiet, non secundum proventum;⁶ et ob hoc in laboribus potius quam in profectibus gloriandum putavit, sicut alibi quoque habes ipsum dicentem: In laboribus plurimis.⁷ Ita, quaeso, fac to quod tuum est; nam Deus quod suum est satis absque tua sollicitudine et anxietate curabit. Planta, riga, fer curam; et tuas explicuisti pastes.

"Soul" in this usage does not contain all the subtle definitions of philosophy sometimes applied to it, but is used simply of the essence of human personality. It refers to the spiritual,

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1. John T. McNeill, A History of the Cure of Souls, Preface.
 2. Sancti Bernardi, De Consideratione (1828 edn.), Lib. IV, Caput II, p. 129f.
 3. Luke 10:35.
 4. Ovid. I de Pont., eleg. 10, (Bernard's Reference).
 5. I Corinthians 15:10.
 6. I Corinthians 3:8.
 7. II Corinthians 11:23.

as contrasted with the physical, man; though, of course, there is no attempt here to suggest that the two can ever be completely separated. "Soul" is used here, instead of person, in order to point up the fact of man's continual and abiding relationship to God and of his need for God. This was a fundamental Puritan belief.

The term cure of souls, then, refers to the pastoral care of persons in those matters of the spiritual life. It is readily applied to the many tasks performed by those who exercise spiritual charge over the flock. The cure of souls in seventeenth century English Puritanism was primarily concerned with conscience and its care.

It is necessary to say something of the use and meaning of the term "Puritan". It began, like many other religious sobriquet, as a term of derision,¹ and quickly became equated with all those dissatisfied with Elizabeth's settlement of religion and all those who in the next century attempted a further reformation of English religion. It includes, therefore, not only the Presbyterians and Nonconformists before and after 1662, but also some of the members of the Established Church, the Independents, most of the Separatists and sectaries, many individual preachers and

1. Cf., e.g. Baxter's remark that his father, "only for reading Scripture when the rest were Dancing on the Lord's Day, and for praying (by a Form out of the end of the Common Prayer Book) in his House, and for reprovng Drunkards and Swearers, and for talking sometimes a few words of Scripture and the Life to come ... was reviled commonly by the Name of Puritan, Precision and Hypocrite: and so were the Godly Conformable Ministers that lived any where in the Country near us, ..." R.B., i, 3.

even the Quakers.¹ With the exception of certain delimitations to be noted later, the bulk of material in this thesis is drawn from this vast milieu.

It may be useful, also, to define the term "casuistry"; it appears often in the text, but it is not synonymous, as some would make it out to be, with the phrase cure of souls. It is a derivative of the Latin word casus meaning a "case" and is defined as the science of dealing with cases of conscience;² that is, of bringing general moral principles to bear upon a particular case or "collection of unforeseen circumstances - a new instance - in regard to which the principles of conduct or law have not hitherto been defined."³ Casuistry means one thing to a Roman Catholic and another to a Protestant. Roman Catholic casuistry is inseparable from the confessional; it is the private manual of the priest, designed to aid him in hearing confessions. Protestant casuistry is primarily intended for the use of perplexed persons, and served more or less sufficiently the purpose of a living guide.⁴ The Puritans were casuists in so far as they attempted to guide the consciences of the troubled and disturbed; but they were much more than students of casuistical divinity, they were

1. Geoffrey Nuttall, in The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience, has placed all students of the seventeenth century in immeasurable debt for the clear and concise way in which he has shown that all the Puritan parties are "spiritually nearer to one another than is any of them to the Roman Catholic Church or to the Laudian party within the Church of England." p.9.
2. Murray, op. cit., "casuistry".
3. Kenneth E. Kirk, Conscience and Its Problems, p. 109.
4. Cf. H. Hensley Henson, Studies in English Religion in the Seventeenth Century, p. 175f.

spiritual physicians of the soul.

History

There is no attempt here to write the whole history of the cure of souls; this task has already been ably accomplished by McNeill.¹ It may prove helpful, however, to trace the general outline of that history, sketching in the historical background to the Puritan Age and following the Protestant practice to its failure in the eighteenth century and attempted revival in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The practice of the cure of souls had its beginning among the ancient guides of Israel and the Stoic philosophers, both of whom were casuists par excellence. The casuistry of the former manifests itself in an extreme legalism. One element of Judaism, Pharisaism, attempted to legislate beforehand for every conceivable emergency, making law the master of life and leaving no place for conscience in the guidance of individual life. An older element, the wise men and prophets, looked upon law as the servant of life, stressed godliness and moral rectitude, and were actively engaged in educating the conscience, "the lamp of the Lord."² These two traditions were merged together in the work of the scribes of the first century A.D., who were extremely conscientious, making it a point to be "available at all times for consultation, and to answer inquirers patiently;"³ but who were also harshly censured by Christ.⁴ The casuistry of earlier

1. Cf. A History of the Cure of Souls and "Religious Healing of Soul and Body: An Historical Survey," in The Church and Mental Health, ed. Paul B. Maves.

2. Proverbs 20:27.

3. McNeill, A History of the Cure of Souls, p.14.

4. Matthew 23:1ff

Stoicism was impregnated with sophistry, which often caused it to treat the problems and frailties of everyday life with complacency, exalting intention over accomplishment, and the end over the means. Later Stoics, on the other hand, made a real attempt to find solutions for every day moral problems, and made a genuine contribution to the literature of consolation.

The Early Church, beginning with Paul, who Schlunk¹ characterises as one who possessed "the gift of the cure of souls [Seelsorge]" in outstanding measure and employed the art with wonderful mastery," rejected the casuistry of an earlier age and focused its attention on the practice of other elements in the cura animarum. This change in emphasis was precipitated by the beginning of the parochial ministry. Tertullian, Gregory Nazianzen, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Gregory the Great and others, wrote valuable treatises on the pastoral office, directing those who held cures to the work of healing, preaching, catechizing, exercising discipline and offering consolation. Catechizing, in particular, played an important role at this time in preparing catechumens for Church membership and for admission to the Lord's Supper.

The Church of the early Middle Ages, its membership swelled by the mass conversion of barbarian invaders, was thrown back on fundamentals. Its main work was not the instrumenting of the moral law, but the implanting of it. Its literature was not treatises on pastoral work, but penitential books. However, from the

1. Quoted by Greeves, op. cit., p.14.

time of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) - which made confession of sin obligatory upon the faithful - casuistry, of a Pharisaic fashion, began again in earnest. It was necessitated by the need to adjust cases to penance. Throughout most of the Middle Ages pastoral work was in the main confined to the hearing of confession and the granting of absolution.

With the Reformation came a new emphasis upon the cure of souls.¹ Bernard of Clairvaux, John Wyclif and John Huss ushered in the light, but the day did not fully dawn until the sixteenth century. McNeill² states: "In matters concerning the cure of souls the German Reformation had its inception." His words refer to the position held by Luther and others on indulgences as formal assurances of pardon from sin. Five features of this sixteenth century cure of souls stand out. The Reformers made Scripture the authority for faith and life. They rejected the confessional, although they did not reject confession altogether. They returned to the aedificatio mutua and correptio fraterna of the early Church. They directed their attention to the writing of pastoral literature; Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Bucer, Bullinger, Oecolampadius, to name a few, wrote catechisms, pastoral letters of exhortation and consolation, and treatises on the pastoral office. But the Reformers were too busy with doctrinal conflicts to really turn their attention to ethics and the practical problems

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1. See Seward Hiltner, Preface to Pastoral Theology, pp. 45-51, for a brief account of the development of pastoral theology since the Reformation.
 2. McNeill, op. cit., p. 163.

of the Christian life. It was not until the next century that men began to lament that "we go down to our enemies to sharpen all our instruments, and are beholden to them for offensive and defensive weapons in Cases of Conscience".¹

The void left by the Reformation abandonment of Roman casuistry was filled, in part, by the Puritans. They insisted upon a Biblical ethic which was rooted in theology rather than philosophy. But the moral demands found in Scripture were now seen to be stricter and more precise than the demands of the Medieval Church, and so a new system of casuistry was evolved which was characterized by Biblicism, legalism and asceticism, the hallmarks of Reformation theology, and by moralism, rationalism and individualism, the distinguishing features of Renaissance thought.² The confessional was replaced by the conscience as court and witness. This new system was not merely concerned with principles, but^{also} with the application of those principles to particular cases. There was a sustained attempt, also, to formulate and practically enforce a new conception of the Christian Church as a society exercising moral discipline over its members. This new emphasis conditioned the Puritan ministry and qualified their practice of the cure of souls.³

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1. Thomas Fuller, The Holy State, Bk.II, p. 82.
 2. Cf. Norman K. Clifford, "Casuistical Divinity in English Puritanism During the Seventeenth Century: Its Origins, Development and Significance".
 3. W. Cunningham's statement in his The Cure of Souls, p. 84, that "the Puritans were apt to disparage the duty of pastoral care, as unnecessary and superstitious", is completely without basis in fact.

By definition the Puritans understood conscience to be both synteresis, "a storehouse of principles", and conscientia, the application of those principles by right reason to specific moral actions. They determined, therefore, to instruct both the synteresis and conscientia. This was accomplished in public assemblies by preaching and through a revival of catechizing, and in private through Bible and other devotional reading. The formulation of rules of conscience and the detailed amassing of cases of conscience was an aid to this work. Those persons who could not apply the content of synteresis to specific moral actions, either because they lacked an instructed conscience or the ability to act, were further helped through consultation with their pastor in Christian conference and through the post. In extreme cases, such as failure to seek or heed advice, the pastor's final recourse in caring for conscience was to resort to ecclesiastical discipline.

This practice flourished for about a century and then quickly died away. Several reasons have been advanced for its demise. There was the growing suspicion, brought about by the popularity of "probabilism", that casuistry, in particular Roman, had a deteriorating effect on men's souls. Secondly, the phenomenon of pietism, dating from the publication of Philip Jacob Spener's Pia Desideria (1678), struck at the roots of ecclesiastical organization and discipline and tended to sweep away all systems. Thirdly, and closer at home, the emergence of naturalism under the aegis of Hobbes, culminating in the simple philosophy of deism, monopolised the attention of theologians and at the same time infected their theology. Finally, the ejection of 1662 drove from the churches most of the exponents of this art; true, some later returned, but

the majority, because of death, old age, or disability, never again exercised a ministry and the practice died with them.

From the beginning of the eighteenth century on, systematic casuistry has had its representation only in the Roman communion. Some giants of the Protestant clergy of this century, like Philip Doddridge, Isaac Watts, John Wesley and Jonathan Edwards, and groups such as the Moravians and Methodists - all influenced by pietism - continued to minister effectively to souls. But pietism, stressing "attention to personal religion with a strong emphasis upon communion¹ and the mutual priesthood of all Christians", gradually brought about a shift in the emphasis of pastoral care, from the Puritan stress upon conscience to the pietistic stress upon the heart.

A new interest in soul care began again in the early nineteenth century religious revivals and has continued until the present day. In Lutheran Germany, fresh attention was given to confession, mutual edification and correction; and through the work of Friedrich Schliermacher practical theology became a structured discipline. Elsewhere on the continent this renewed interest in the cure of souls resulted in the publication of numerous manuals emphasizing the practical work of the ministry; most notable among these are Pastoral Theology (1853), the posthumously published lectures of the Swiss pastor, Alexandre Vinet, and Practical Theology (1878), by the Dutch scholar, John Jacob Van Oosterzee. In Britain, the cure of souls and moral theology were both revived. John Watson's The Cure of Souls (1896), is the most famous and perhaps most

1. McNeill, op.cit., p. 182

influential work produced during this revival. It was first delivered at Yale University in the Lyman Beecher Lectures series. The revival of moral theology begun at Cambridge by William Whewell and carried on by F. D. Maurice has continued on into this century through the influence of Kenneth E. Kirk and R. C. Mortimer. This movement reflects the only sustained Protestant attempt in the nineteenth century to ^{the}reinstatement of the conscience as a focal point of pastoral concern. In the United States the production of systematic works on pastoral theology, the best known of which is Washington Gladden's The Christian Pastor and the Working Church (1898), occupied pastors and teachers throughout the last half of the century. The main concern of all communions in this century was to systematize pastoral care into a "theology" and to apply it practically.

With the advent of the twentieth century psychology began to influence the cure of souls. First the British and then the Americans "were quick to see the potential significance of the new psychology for the work of the minister."¹ Today, theological faculties, especially in North America, are including among the courses in their curriculum studies in the "Cure of Souls", seminars on Mental Health and graduate degrees in Pastoral Psychology. From the point of view of the Puritan practice, we are struck by the fact that at the present moment there is a new interest in the place and role of conscience in the life of man; an interest stimulated by Freud, and aided by the researches of

1. Hiltner, op. cit., p. 50.

modern psychiatry.

Methodology

This thesis is divided into four parts corresponding to the four minor problems of this study. The first section, including this chapter and the succeeding one dealing with the conscience, is by way of introduction; it covers ground traversed before and is therefore comparatively brief. The second section is an examination of two ways in which pastors instructed the conscience. The treatment of catechizing is a new study while the chapter on cases of conscience has its counterpart in other works. In the third section, methods of counselling and resolving those disturbed and troubled in conscience are considered. This is by far the largest section; three chapters, "Christian Conference", "Pastoral Letter Writing", and "The Correspondence of Richard Baxter" are all fresh contributions, the final brief chapter on discipline is by way of completing the picture of the Puritan practice. The final section is a critical evaluation.

Primarily, this is not a study of leading individuals but of a fraternity of men. I have allowed these physicians of the soul, when ever possible, to speak for themselves, reserving until the conclusion critical comments.

Delimitations

It may be wise to observe some delimitations of the field. First, this is a study of the seventeenth century. I have not altogether excluded works published before and after; but these were

all written by men whose lives, at least in part, were lived in the century of the Stuarts.

Secondly, this is a study of religion in England. I have noted the passing of some to the New World as well as other parts of the old; but the compass of this study did not allow an adequate consideration of the development of the Puritan cure of souls elsewhere.

Thirdly, this study was limited to the public practices in the cure of souls and only incidentally takes notice of Puritan private devotion and meditation.¹ Further, preaching, though one of the public practices, is not treated here because it has received more than adequate treatment in other places.²

Finally, this study was limited to those Puritan physicians of the soul who form a human link between Perkins and Ames and Baxter and Howe. According to present nomenclature they are classified as being of the conservative and middle parties in Puritanism.³ They are referred to in this thesis as the Cambridge Puritans and the later nonconforming Presbyterians and Independents. Few, if any, of the left wing of Puritanism come in for treatment, except as they bear relation to one in the middle or right wing; primarily, because they are not directly related or indebted to

1. For more information about this phase of Puritanism see: Douglas Bush, English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century (1945), Horton Davies, The Worship of the English Puritans (1948), M.M. Knappen, Two Elizabethan Puritan Diaries (1933), and Gordon Wakefield, Puritan Devotion (1957).
2. Especially in John Brown's Puritan Preaching in England (1899) and W. Fraser Mitchell's English Pulpit Oratory from Andrewes to Tillotson (1932).
3. Nuttall, op. cit., p. 8ff.

Perkins and Ames and the other Cambridge Puritans. In one sense this is regrettable, because many of the Baptists, other sectaries, and Quakers, were notable physicians of the soul.

Physicians of the Soul

The number of men who in this century devoted themselves to the cure of souls is legion.¹ To recount their several careers would be a task beyond the scope of this present study. They are remembered in such chronicles of nonconformity as those of Calamy, Clarke, Neal and Brook. The lives of many are recorded in the Dictionary of National Biography. Their published works fill up the pages of the Short Title Catalogue. What has not been so clearly told is the relation existing between them, the source of their inspiration, doctrine, and practice, and the manner in which they advanced their cause.² This is perhaps best narrated by centering attention on certain leaders of the spiritual brotherhood prior to the Westminster Assembly.

The Cambridge Puritans

Most of the early Puritans, that is, the reform party within the Church of England, sprang as a rule from the gentry or merchant class. A few went to Oxford, but most attended Cambridge,

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1. See Appendix A for a partial list of the Puritan physicians of the soul.
 2. William Haller in The Rise of Puritanism, pp. 51-82 traces the development of a "number of men who devoted themselves to spiritual preaching." Many of the names mentioned in this section are to be found in his survey.

particularly Christ's College, Emmanuel College and Sidney Sussex College.¹ It is to Cambridge, therefore, that one must go if he wishes to meet those men and the influences which directed them toward the formal undertaking of the cure of souls.

Had one entered the quiet town of Cambridge at the turn of the seventeenth century and walked along the old Roman road which passes Christ's College and turned into the quadrangle of that college, or settled into one of the uncomfortable pews of Great St. Andrew's Church just across the way, he surely would have seen William Perkins, the dominant personality of the period. He was easily recognizable to his contemporaries being a man of "ruddy complexion, very fat and corpulent, lame of the right hand."² He matriculated at Christ's College in June, 1577, while Laurence Chaderton was still there, probably taking his Puritan bias from him, and was elected fellow of that college about the time Chaderton moved on to Emmanuel. Perkins entered Cambridge with a reputation for drunkenness that caused his name to become a by-word for debauchery. But if so the drunkard was converted and soon displayed a passion for souls. Early in his ministry he made it a weekly practice to preach to the condemned prisoners in Cambridge Castle. This practice sharpened his ability as "an

1. T.R. Glover in Cambridge Retrospect writes: "Oxford, it has been said, is the parent of great movements, and Cambridge of great men; but the great movements are not always forward, while the really great men of Cambridge have again and again lifted the thought of the action to a new level - in poetry, in science, in religious experience." p. 17.

All the men in this section are the subject of articles in D.N.B.

2. Fuller, op. cit., p. 84.

excellent chirurgeon... at joynting of a broken soul, and at stat-
ing of a doubtful conscience."¹ It also gained for him a certain
measure of renown and he was soon translated to the pulpit of
Great St. Andrews. It was while here that this "moderate though
predestinarian Puritan,"² through his preaching and example, exer-
cised such an important influence upon the whole fraternity of
spiritual physicians. It was there that both town and gown flock-
ed, and his student William Ames³ testifies of him: "Left he many
behinde him affected with that study [Cases of Conscience]; who
by their godly Sermons (through God's assistance) made it to runne,
increase, and be glorified throughout England." His chief contri-
bution to Protestant casuistry was in teaching his country men how
to apply scriptural dicta to the solution of the infinite problems
of every day life.

William Ames was perhaps the most appreciative of Perkins's
students, coming under his spell while the latter was a fellow.
Ames matriculated pensioner at Christ's, 1594, the same year as
John Downname, celebrated Puritan writer of devotional literature,
and was elected fellow one year after his tutor's death. One of
the high lights of his undergraduate days was when he heard Per-
kins preach: "I gladly call to minde the time, when being young,
I heard worthy Master Perkins....And amongst other things which
he Preached profitably, hee began at length to Teach, how with the

1. Ibid., p. 82.

2. Louis B. Wright, "William Perkins: Elizabethan Apostle of
'Practical Divinity'," Huntington Library Quarterly, p. 180.

3. William Ames, Conscience with the Power and Cases Thereof,
Preface.

tongue of the learned one might speake a word in due season to him that is weary...by untying and explaining diligently, CASES OF CONSCIENCE (as they are called)."¹ Perkins' influence over his student was a lasting one;² for long after his Cambridge days, Ames was happy to admit:³

My heart hath ever since been so set upon that study / Cases of Conscience / that I have thought it worthy to be followed with all care, by all men....Being afterwards called to a public charge of Teaching in the Universities, I esteemed nothing better, or more excellent, then to goo before those that were students for the Ministrie, in this same manner of teaching.

Ames came to a relatively quiet Cambridge, but by the time of his hasty departure it was a disturbed and agitated one. By the year 1610, Ames had become an outspoken critic of university life, attacking in sermons the prevalent diversions of the day, i.e. card playing, dice and drinking. One particular address was so offensive that he, seeing expulsion imminent, resigned his fellowship and left England for the Netherlands. He finished out his life there acting as pastor and teacher, first at Leyden, later at the University of Franeker, and finally at Rotterdam. It was while he was in Holland that he wrote the treatise which earned for him the name of "Amesius", De Conscientia ejus Jure et Casibus (1632). It contains the most exhaustive Puritan definition of conscience written and earned the tribute of no less a

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1. Loc. cit.
 2. Karl Reuter, Wilhelm Amesius der führende Theologe des erwachenden reformierten Pietismus, substantiates this idea and rejects the nineteenth century notion that Ames was more indebted to Alsted's Theologia Casuum (1621).
 3. Ames, op. cit.

casuist than Richard Baxter:¹ "Amesius hath exceeded all, though briefly." The teaching of Ames, and through him of Perkins, was disseminated through all England, Europe, and New England.² From our point of view Ames's contribution to casuistical divinity is his added stress upon conscience. He recognized it as the instrumentality of God in man, directing his will, and fusing the ethical and religious into a single entity.

Great St. Andrews, standing under the shadow of Christ's College, was Master Perkins's classroom. Every week its pews were filled with a sea of faces from Christ's, Emmanuel, Sidney Sussex, Kings, Trinity, and the other Cambridge colleges. The experience of one man, Richard Blackerby, was undoubtedly duplicated hundreds of times over: "While he was in the University, famous Mr. Perkins was a Preacher and Lecturer in the Town of Cambridge, upon whose ministry he diligently attended; whereby his Soul...was deeply wrought upon, and truly converted."³

Samuel Crooke was another of those Cambridge men who "in his younger years was a constant, and diligent hearer, and great admirer of that man of God, Master William Perkins."⁴ Crooke was admitted pensioner at newly established Emmanuel College in the

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1. The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter, ed. William Orme, II, viii.
 2. H. McLachlen, in English Education Under the Test Acts, accounts for Ames's lasting influence by the fact that his books were standard reading in all the dissenting academies. Perry Miller, in The New England Mind: the seventeenth century, reports that Ames's library came to New England shortly after his death and his works were eagerly read by several generations of Harvard men.
 3. Samuel Clarke, The Lives of Sundry Eminent Persons in this Later Age, i. 57.
 4. Samuel Clarke, A General Martyrologie, containing a collection of all the greatest persecutions which have befallen the church of Christ from the creation, to our present times. Whereunto is added the lives of thirty-two English divines. (1677 edn.) 11, 202.

year 1589, and later elected fellow about the same time that Perkins relinquished his fellowship at Christ's. Crooke was "highly esteemed in the university both for his candid and ingenuous behaviour in a comely person, as also for his pregnant parts, ready wit, great industry, and answerable proficiency in all kinds of Polite Learning"¹. Upon ordination he left the university, the same year in which Perkins departed this mortal life, 1602, and assumed the charge of Wrington, Somersetshire, which he retained until his death at the age of seventy-five. This prince of the pulpit, who refused to allow bishops, time, or civil war to interrupt his ministry, learned his Puritan theology at Emmanuel and the art of relieving afflicted consciences from the St. Andrew's lecturer.² He apparently learned well, for it is written of him:

If any Christian came to him for resolution in cases of Conscience, or for counsel in straits, or for comfort in spiritual desertions, or for healing of a wounded spirit; as God had given him an excellent spirit of discerning to judge of this condition, and of the most seasonable applicatives; and an exquisite dexterity to speak a word in season to the weary, and fainting soul; so he was never shie, Coy, or difficult to be spoken with, nor lofty, or supercilious to any to whom he gave access; but shewed forth all tenderness, pity, and compassion to them: he heard them fully, and patiently, and wisely administered to their several distresses, and ever sent them away... not only not grieved, but very well satisfied, and abundantly comforted.

John Cotton was another who attended an occasional Perkin's lecture. His was a reluctant conversion. "During his residence in the university", records Clarke,³ "God began to work upon him by

1. Loc. cit.

2. Ibid., ii. 209

3. Clarke, op. cit., ii, 218

the ministry of Mr. William Perkins of blessed memory; but the notions and stirrings of his heart which then were, he suppressed thinking".

¹ Clarke adds, that on the day of Perkin's death when Cotton heard the bells tolling the death knell, "he was secretly glad in his heart, that he should now be rid of him, who had, as he said, laid seige to, and beleaguered his heart". But the seed which Perkins planted did not rot; it came to fruition under the ministry of young Richard Sibbes, Fellow at St. John's College, and the same whose works, Bruised Reed,² greatly influenced Baxter. Cotton went to Trinity College in 1598 and was, at the time of his conversion, a student at Emmanuel, where later he progressed to fellow. Those who had attended Cotton's pre-conversion lectures were disappointed with the change the Spirit and the influence of Sibbes had worked in him, for where previously his addresses had been masterpieces of scholastic rhetoric and elocution, now they were genuine messages of salvation. On one occasion in particular the students' reaction left the preacher deflated and depressed. "But Lo... Master Preston knocks at his door, and coming in, acquaints him with his spiritual condition, and how it pleased God to speak effectually unto his heart by that sermon."³ Preston later succeeded the ageless Chaderton as Master of Emmanuel. Cotton left Cambridge two years after Ames and became vicar of the parish at Boston in Lincolnshire. He held that post until 1634, whereupon he set sail for another Boston.

1. Loc. cit.

2. Baxter records: "And about that time it pleased God that a poor Pedlar came to the Door that had Ballads and some good Books; and my Father bought of him Dr. Sibb's Bruised Reed. This also I read, and found it suited to my state, and reasonably sent me; which opened more the Lord of God to me, and gave me a livelier apprehension of the Mystery of Redemption, and how much I was beholden to Jesus Christ." R.B., i, 3.

3. John Norton, Able Being Dead, p.13f

Upon his arrival in the New World he decided to settle in Cambridge and there he exercised a ministry which he had first seen practised¹ in "old" Cambridge by godly Perkins. His namesake, Cotton Mather, testifies of him: "For besides his constant Preaching, more than once every week, many Cases were brought unto him far and near, in resolving whereof, as he took much time, so he did much good, being a most excellent casuist." He was close friend and helpful counsel, on both sides of the Atlantic, to three other members of the spiritual brotherhood, John Dod, John Preston, and Thomas Hooker.

There was an occasional strange face in the Great St. Andrew's audience. Robert Bolton once ventured the eighty odd miles from Oxford and attended one of the celebrated Perkins's lectures. To say the least, he was not impressed; he described him as "a barren empty fellow, and a very mean scholar".² Later, when he experienced the renewing influence of divine grace, he changed his opinion, saying that Mr. Perkins was as learned and godly a divine as the Church had enjoyed for many years.³ This "most religious and learned Puritan"⁴ was sent to Lincoln College, Oxford, about the year 1590 from whence he later removed to Brasenose where he became a fellow in the year of Perkins's death. It was not until two-thirds of his life had passed that he finally entered into orders and accepted the rectorship of Boughton, Northamptonshire, which he retained until his death, eighteen years later. As a student, "he grew well studied

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1. Magnalia Christi Americana, Bk.III, p.26
 2. Benjamin Brook, The Lives of the Puritans, II, 393
 3. Loc. cit.
 4. Anthony Wood, Athenae Oxoniensis, I, 560

in Metaphysics, Mathematics, and in all School Divinity, especially in Thomas Aquinas; some of whose works he had read over once or twice".¹ This acquaintance with the Angelic Doctor, along with his early encounter with lecturer Perkins, played a significant part in his training and he became famous for having "an excellent art in relieving afflicted consciences, so that he was sought to far, and near; yea divers beyond Sea desired his resolution in divers Cases of Conscience".²

It was a sad October day, 1602, when the bells tolled for Perkins's departure, for he was now gone from whom "the Scholar could heare no learned³er, and the Townsmen plainer Sermons." The vacancy left by him at Great St. Andrews was not quickly filled; but after a diligent search Paul Baynes, another student of Christ's and former classmate of Ames, was settled on. His early years at Cambridge were wasted in irregular conduct; his actions were so bad that when his father heard of them, he disinherited him. The Christ's College regimen, the influence of Perkins, and association with other future physicians of the soul, had their affect; for at the time of his appointment, it was said, that Baynes's "sharpness of wit... depth of judgement...variety of reading...aptness to teach...

1. Wood, op.cit.

2. Samuel Clarke, The Marrow of Ecclesiastical Historie contained in the lives of the fathers and other learned men, and famous divines, 1,490f. Cf., also, Thomas Fuller, Able Redeivus, p.589.

A letter from Edmund Verney to Ralph Verney, Letters and Papers of the Verney Family, down to the end of the year 1639 (Camden Society), p.272, suggests that Bolton's works were as treasured as his counsel: "There is one thing that I would begge you to make a guift to me of, which is, Mr. Bolton's workes. Most of them I can name to you, being these, his Walking with God, his instruction for the Comforting of a right afflicted Conscience, and his Four Last Things."

3. Thomas Fuller, Abel Redeivus, p. 434.

holy, pleasant, and heavenly conversation...was inferior to none."¹ His fame had grown so great that no one was deemed suitable to succeed Perkins as "holy Baynes". Like his predecessor, Baynes was "an excellent Casuist, and thereupon many doubting Christians repaired to him for satisfaction in cases of Conscience."² He was not as successful as Perkins in avoiding controverted questions and keeping his pulpit undisturbed, so that his ministry at St. Andrews was cut short by the bishop's intervention, and he had to pass the remaining eleven years of his life in semi-retirement. It is of interest to note in passing that Richard Sibbes, to whom both John Cotton and Richard Baxter owe their growth in grace, was himself converted under Baynes's ministry.³

The death of Perkins, the quieting of Baynes, the disappearance from the streets and lanes of the town on the River Cam of Ames, Crooke, Bolton, Dowame and the others, would appear to signal the end of an era, the demise of the spiritual brotherhood. Yet it is a tribute to the power of Perkins's influence that he gained in popularity, rather than diminished, after his death. When young Thomas Goodwin, later destined to become leading Independent at the Westminster Assembly and President of Magdalene College, Oxford,⁴ came to Cambridge in his teens, he wrote this impression of his new surroundings: "The town was then filled with the discourse of the Power of Mr. Perkins

1. Brook, op. cit., II, 262.

2. Samuel Clarke, A General Martyrologie, ii, 22.

3. Ibid., ii, 143.

4. See Geoffrey F. Nuttall, Visible Saints, for an account of Goodwin's role in the formation and development of Congregationalism.

his ministry, still fresh in Mens Memories."¹ This tribute was penned twelve years after Perkins's death and it has been rightly estimated that his influence dominated Puritans for the next half century.²

The brotherhood of spiritual physicians, never anything formal or organized, but simply an association of men united by personal ties and common purpose, continued as strong in the two decades following Perkins's death as it had been in those preceding it, for he was not the only Puritan influence at Cambridge. The founding of two new Puritan colleges contributed greatly to the rise of Puritanism. The first, Emmanuel College, was established in 1584, by Sir Walter Mildmay, Chancellor of the Exchequer. From the beginning, starting with the appointment of Laurence Chaderton as master, his design was clear.³ Chaderton had already, while at Christ's College, been an inspiration to countless numbers of youths who were captivated by his Puritan doctrines. As Master of Emmanuel he was to continue this inspiration for forty more years. Chaderton, despite his long life and chequered career, "is now one of the most shadowy figures"⁴ of the Cambridge Puritans. He was tutored by Cartwright, elected a representative to the Hampton Court Conference, chosen as a

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1. The Works of Thomas Goodwin, Nichol's Series of Standard Divines, II, lviii.
 2. Gordon S. Wakefield, Puritan Devotion, p.6.
 3. Thomas Fuller, in the History of Cambridge (1655 edn.), p.147, relates that Queen Elizabeth, when she had received several reports of the happenings at Emmanuel, summoned Mildmay to her: "Sir," she said, "I hear you have erected a Puritan Foundation. No, Madam," he replied, "farre be it from me to countenance any thing contrary to your established Lawes, but I have set an Acorn, which when it becomes an Oake, God alone knows what will be the fruit thereof."
 4. William Haller, Rise of Puritanism, p. 55.

member of the committee appointed to produce the Authorized Version of the Bible, lecturer for fifty years at St. Clement's Danes, but best remembered by his contemporaries and historians as spiritual father to the young men of Emmanuel. Haller¹ says: "Practically nothing has come to us in print that might show the secret of Chaderton's power, but there can be no question that he perhaps more than any other man was responsible for the steadily increasing stream of men who went forth from Emmanuel to preach the word in plain English to the plain people."

The names of those who passed through Mildmay's college are as impressive as the list of graduates from Christ's. Besides John Cotton and Samuel Crooke, already met, there is for instance William Bradshaw, described by Clarke² as:

a Man of eminent Parts...and dissolving of difficult cases of Conscience; to which purpose not only many even from remote Parts resorted unto him, either of their own accord, or directed and recommended unto him by other his Brethren of the Ministry, as one most likely of any to give Satisfaction in their doubts; but divers of them also, of good note (as by their Letters to him may appear) deemed it no disparagement to seek resolution from him in questions of that nature themselves.

Bradshaw, because of his strong Puritan opinions (he wrote them down for the world to read)³ was denied an opportunity to minister publicly and never held a preferment. Bradshaw's classmate, Joseph Hall, rejected the theology of Emmanuel but accepted its teaching on practical divinity; he went on to become Bishop of Norwich and one of the Church's great casuists. Thomas Hooker,

1. Haller, op. cit.

2. Clarke, op. cit., ii, 51

3. English Puritanisme, containing the maine opinions of the rigidest sort of those that are called Puritanes in the realm of England.

of New England fame, was an Emmanuel man, too. Of his ministry, both at home and abroad, Cotton Mather¹ writes: "He had a singular ability at giving answers to cases of Conscience; whereof happy was the Experience of some Thousands." The historian, biographer and author of a manual on cases of conscience, Samuel Clarke, also went to Emmanuel. He was one of the last of Chaderton's students, for in 1622, the latter turned over the college to the competent and celebrated John Preston. The reader will remember that he had been converted under the Cambridge ministry of John Cotton.

Sidney Sussex, the second newly established Puritan institution, was founded shortly after Emmanuel. Three of its graduates of interest here are Julines Herring, Thomas Gataker and Jeremiah Whitaker. Herring ministered both in England and the Netherlands and was noted for his conscientious devotion to the cure of souls: "He took great delight in his studies...and was often willing to misse a meal, that he might the more satisfie himself in conversing with his Books...And yet such were his compassions towards afflicted Consciences, that he gave charge unto his whole Family, to send none such away till they had spoken with him,"² Gataker was a member of the Westminster Assembly and a noted catechist.³ Whitaker was also a member of the Assembly and a faithful physician of the soul. Simon Ashe preached his funeral sermon and addressed it "To the Right Honourable Elizabeth, Countess Dowager of Exeter"; he reminded this gracious lady of just how faithful

1. Mather, *op. cit.*, III, 65.
 2. Clarke, *op. cit.*, ii, 163.
 3. Cf. Appendix A.

a servant he was: "he was your wise counsellour in all your doubts, and difficulties, your compassionate comforter; in all straights and sorrowes, your vigilant physician to prevent spiritual sickness and infection; your zealous Incourager in all wayes of holy service, and a daily Remembrancer of you and yours before the Throne of Grace."¹

The increase in the number of spiritual physicians, between the Elizabethan settlement and the Westminster Assembly, although, of course, indebted to Perkins and the rise of Puritanism at Cambridge, most owes its phenomenal growth to the spreading of interest in the cure of souls through personal relationship and friendship. Almost every college can boast of a noted physician of the soul who passed through its halls; it was these men, no less than those already mentioned, who encouraged, directed, and aided others in the practical work of the ministry. John Carter of Clare Hall was one of the earlier ones, having left Cambridge before the arrival of Perkins. Clarke² writes of him: "He had a special dexterity in comforting afflicted consciences; resolving doubts, and answering questions." One of the most famous figures of the Puritan age, William Gouge, was a King's College man. He was a member of the Westminster Assembly, influential London minister, "the Father of the London Divines, and the Oracle of his time."³ Because "of his ability and dexterity in

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1. Living Loves betwixt Christ and Dying Christians. A Sermon. Dedication.
 2. Clarke, op. cit., ii, 136.
 3. Ibid., ii, 242.

resolving Cases of Conscience he was much sought unto for his judgement in doubtful cases, and scruples of Conscience, and that not only by ordinary Christians, but by divers Ministers also both in the City and county, sometimes by word of mouth, and others sometimes by writing."¹ Herbert Palmer, also a member of the Assembly - chairman of the committee on the catechism - was equally sought after by "the godly Ministers and People, both in the City and Countrey thereabouts."² Palmer attended John's and Queens, arriving at the former after Gouge's time.

Nor was the movement exclusively confined to Cambridge, even some at Oxford caught the contagion. Men, like Bolton, received it first hand; others second and third. Robert Harris, labelled by Wood,³ "a famed puritanical Preacher of his time," came early to Oxford, took holy orders, and went out as Rector of Hanwell. He struck up an acquaintance with the great John Dod and it proved to be a lasting one, for in later life it was said of Dod, that he "would not expound a Text, preach a Sermon, answer a case of Conscience (whereof many were early brought to him) without the concurrence of Master Harris with him."⁴ John Ball, the noted catechist, was admitted to Brasenose College the same year in which Perkins died. Wood⁵ appears more sympathetic toward him than is

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1. Clarke, op. cit., ii, 242.
 2. Ibid., ii, 186.
 3. Wood, op. cit., II, 227.
 4. Clarke, op. cit., ii, 319.
 5. Wood, op. cit., I, 636f.

usual for after enumerating his ministries he concludes: "he removed into Staffordshire, and became Curate of Whitmore, a Chappel of ease to Stoke, where he lived (and died) a Nonconformist in a poor House, a poor Habit, with poor Maintenance." Clarke gives this glowing account of his ability:¹ "He was so enriched with knowledge both in Practical and Polemical Divinity; he was so able to interpret and reconcile difficult Scriptures; he had such dexterity in dealing with afflicted consciences, and he was so well furnished with Ministerial gifts for Preaching, Prayers, and the administration of both Sacrements, that it was not easie to discover wherein he most excelled." Sometime after he had left Brasenose another famous physician of the soul, Richard Mather, entered. He spent only a short time in England, choosing to follow Cotton and Hooker across the Atlantic. Clarke's description takes in account both ministries:²

After his entrance upon his Ministry, he was not only in Old England (as hath been said) but also in New-England abundant in Labours. For (except when he had an Assistant, which was seldom) he preached twice every Lords Day and a Lecture once in a fortnight, besides many occasional Sermons, both in publick, and in private. Also he was much exercised in answering many Practical Cases of Conscience and in Polemical, especially Disciplinary Discourses.

These influences which so greatly contributed to the steadily increasing stream of Puritan physicians of the soul did not quickly ebb away. They were as strong in the 1640's as they had been earlier. When young Oliver Heywood left Cambridge, having gone up in 1647, he made this notation in his diary:³ "My time and thoughts

1. Clarke, op. cit., ii, 149.

2. Samuel Clarke, The Lives of Sundry Eminent Persons in this Later Age, p. 136.

3. Joseph Hunter, The Rise of the Old Dissent, Exemplified in the Life of Oliver Heywood, 1630-1702, p. 46.

were more employed in practical divinity; and experimental truths were more vital and vivifical to my soul. I preferred Perkins, Bolton, Preston, Sibbes, far above Aristotle, Plato, Magirus, and Wendleton, though I despise no laborious authors in these subser-vient studies."

Later Puritans

By the time of the Westminster Assembly and the commencement of the Commonwealth, the stream of spiritual physicians had rapidly risen to flood. An account of the lives of many of them has been preserved by Calamy.¹ Some, like Richard Baxter and John Owen, are famous beyond their century and need no notice here. Others, less famous and yet no less important, have been remembered by Wesley² and revived by Nichol;³ some of these will be met in subsequent chapters. Many, however, were obscure men, whose names have now been forgotten, but whose ministry daily aimed at conscience and its care.

Names like that of William Bates, Thomas Brooks, Thomas Gouge, Lazarus Seaman, who was more sought after for resolution of cases than any other London divine,⁴ Matthew Sylvester and George Trosse, who did "a great deal of work in private...resolving doubts and comforting afflicted consciences,"⁵ adorn the list of Puritan spiritual physicians and are all very familiar. But

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1. See C.R. for an account of the lives of the men mentioned in this section.
 2. John Wesley, A Christian Library: consisting of extracts from and abridgements of the choicest pieces of practical divinity which have been published in the English tongue, 50 vols. (1750)
 3. Cf. Nichol's Series of Standard Divines. Puritan Period, ed. James Nichol.
 4. Samuel Palmer, Editor, Nonconformist's Memorial, I, 80.
 5. Ibid., II, 105.

it was the less familiar men ministering throughout England who made the practice of the cure of souls so ubiquitous.

Sheffield was blessed with two such men. One, Robert Durant, had no university training, yet was able every "Lord's-day, to spend the morning in expounding the Scriptures, wherein he discovered great skill in casuistical divinity."¹ The other, the Presbyterian Edward Prime, was recognized as one who had "a warm heart, and a clear, methodical, casuistical head."² Derbyshire folk had the benefit of the noted pastoral letter writer, John Hieron, who spent a good deal of his time going from house to house compassionately "dealing with troubled souls."³ The ambitious Samuel Fairclough,⁴ "among the first fruits of [Samuel Ward's] ministry,"⁵ visited all in his parish once a month, "spending his time "enquiring into the state of their souls, counselling and directing them as there was occasion."⁶ New England trained Benjamin Woodbridge,⁷ returning home about the time of the Westminster Assembly, was fortunate enough to succeed the more famous Dr. Twisse at Newbury; here he earned "a mighty reputation as a scholar, a preacher, a casuist, and a Christian."⁸ Off and on, between the years 1658-1680, the good people of Colchester were ministered to by Owen Stockton, who "frequently expounded, catechized the youth, and resolved cases of conscience."⁹ He wrote a valuable

1. Ibid., II, 415.

2. Palmer, op. cit., III 449.

3. Ibid., I, 393-395

4. This is the elder Samuel Fairclough; see D.N.B. for an account of his life.

5. Brook, op.cit., II, 452n.

6. Palmer, op.cit., III, 276; R. of Barnardiston at this time.

7. See D.N.B. for an account of his life.

8. Palmer, op. cit., I, 290.

9. Ibid., II, 191.

treatise on Christian conference which shall be dealt with in the appropriate chapter. John Reynolds, one of the members of the Worcestershire Association, was held in very high esteem as being "solid, quick, and judicious, in handling controversial matters [and] very ready in resolving scruples of conscience."¹ Finally, John Collinges, ministering at Norwich both before and after the Ejection, was regarded as "one mighty in the Scripture, an excellent casuist, an unwearied preacher, and a patient sufferer."² As has already been said, the list is legion and we might continue indefinitely.

Summary

This thesis is a study of the practice of the cure of souls in seventeenth century England, within the right and middle wings of Puritanism. It is made necessary by the present revived interest in the cure of souls and by the lack of any examination of the Puritan practice. Up until now only certain aspects of this subject have received treatment, namely - its history, casuistical nature and disciplinary character. This study begins where the others leave off, with an examination of conscience, and goes on to discuss several ways in which pastors ministered to the conscience.

1. Palmer, op. cit., III, 246. Minister at Wolverhampton.

2. Ibid., III, 9.

CHAPTER II

THE PURITAN UNDERSTANDING OF CONSCIENCE

The Nature of Conscience

The Puritans made constant reference to the conscience, and it has been said of them: "no preachers before their time, and few since have made such direct and powerful appeals to this mental faculty."¹ One of their own number deemed "this worthy work of bringing men to good conscience... a worke at which all worke and bookes, should specially ayme"². While another "esteemed those sermons best that came closest to the conscience"³. Before proceeding to an examination of their ministry to the conscience, that is, their practice of the cure of souls, it is necessary to form some impression of their understanding of conscience.

Conscience: A Rational Activity

The Puritans were agreed that conscience was primarily a rational activity.⁴ Perkins described it as "nothing else but a part of the understanding"⁵. "I call conscience Judgement," wrote Ames, "First

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1. The Complete Works of Stephen Charnock, Nichol's Series of Standard Divines. Puritan Period, intro. James M' Cosh, I, xlii.
 2. Jeremiah Dyke, Good Conscience; or A Treatise Shewing the Nature, Meanes, Markes Benefit, and Necessitie thereof (1626 edn.), The Epistle Dedicative.
 3. John Geree, The Character of an old English Puritane or Non-Conformist, p.2.
 4. (The Whole Treatise of the Cases of Conscience), The Works of that Famous and Worthy Minister of Christ in the University of Cambridge, M. William Perkins (1631 edn.), II, 26.
 5. Conscience with the Power and Cases Thereof, trans. out of the Latin, Bk. I, 1.

to show that it belongs to the Understanding, not to the Will." In
 a sermon dealing with the theme of conscience, Samuel Ward proclaimed
 it to be "a noble and divine power...working upon itself by reflection".
 Sibbes rhetorically asks: "What is conscience?" And then answers:
 "the soul itself reflecting upon itself". In like manner, John
 Downname defines it as "a faculty, or power planted by God in the soule
 of man, which reflecteth the understanding upon itselfe". William
 Fenner, in distinguishing between conscience of men and angels, states
 of the former: "Now the conscience of man is the judgment of man upon
 himself as he is subject to God's judgment." Anthony Burgess writes:
 "The conscience is well called the practical understanding". Owen
 defines it as "nothing but that judgment which men do make, and which
 they cannot but make, of their moral actions with reference unto the
 supreme future judgment of God". The catechist, Thomas Lye, teaches
 that it is "the faculty, or act, of the soul of man, reflecting on itself."
 Finally, John Flavel, writing toward the end of the century, mirrors
 the thought of the entire period: "Conscience (as our Divines well
 express it) is the judgment of a man upon himself, as he is subject to
 the judgment of God. A judgment it is, and a practical judgment too;
 it belongs to the understanding faculty."

1. (Sermons and Treatises of Samuel Ward), The Works of Thomas Adams,
Nichol's Series of Standard Divines. Puritan Period, III, 97.
2. The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes, D.D., ed. Alexander Balloch Grosart,
Nichol's Series of Standard Divines. Puritan Period, III, 208f.
3. A Guide to Godlynesse, or a Treatise of a Christian Life (1629 edn.) p.66.
4. The Souls Looking-Glasse, Lively Representing its Estate before God:
with a Treatise of Conscience, p.16.
5. A Treatise of Original Sin, p.223.
6. The Works of John Owen, ed. William H. Goold, V.49.
7. An Explanation of the Shorter Catechism, Compos'd by the Assembly of
Divines at Westminster, 1647. With a plain, and familiar method of
instructing the younger sort, in that Catechism (1676 edn.) Alphabetical
 Table.
8. The Whole Works of the Rev. Mr. John Flavel (1799 edn.), IV, 271

An older tradition: Synteresis and Conscientia

It is evident from these definitions that the Puritans, both the early and later ones, stood in the Thomist tradition: St. Thomas was quite clear that "conscience is a certain pronouncement of the mind."¹ According to the Dominican's thought two elements are to be distinguished in that which is called conscience. First, there is the synderesis² or, intuitive grasp of basic moral principles. Aquinas called it "the law of our mind, because it is a habit containing the precepts of the natural law; which are the first principles of human actions". The second element is conscientia,³ which is nothing else than "knowledge applied to an individual case."⁴

Many of the Puritan moralists elaborated upon this distinction.⁵ Ames, in particular, followed Aquinas. He called synteresis a "storehouse of principles" because it is "a habit of the understanding, by which we doe assent unto the principles of moral action".⁶ He recognized that it differed in different men and further that it suffered due to the consequences of the Fall, but he owned that it "cannot be utterly extinguished or lost".⁷ Its content is "natural

1. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica (1911 edn.), trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, 79:13; 94:1.
2. Aquinas uses the word synderesis, the Puritans spell it synteresis. The Oxford Dictionary of The Christian Church ed. F.L. Cross, "conscience" states: "This divine voice was sometimes termed by the Schoolmen 'synderesis' after a copyist's error for syneidesis in St. Jerome's commentary on Ezekiel."
3. Aquinas and most of the Puritans preferred the Latin here.
4. Aquinas, op.cit., 79:13.
5. See Perry Miller, The New England Mind: the seventeenth century, p.192f, for an excellent discussion of Ames's understanding of conscience as set forth in his De Conscientia ejus Jure et Casibus.
6. Ames, op.cit., Bk.I, 4.
7. Ames, op.cit., Bk.I, 5.

principles" derived from the Natural Law and "practical truths acquired¹ through the revelation we have by faith". Therefore, he concluded,² "the perfect and only rule of conscience is the revealed will of God", since it makes explicit all the premises which the light of nature can discover, and in addition contains all the precepts of duty to God.

Aquinas's second element is called by Ames "witness" or³ "judgement". He writes: "By judgement therefore, in the definition of Conscience, (I understand most properly with the best Schoolmen) an act of practical judgement, proceeding from the Understanding by the power or means of a habit". We shall note shortly how this judgement of self based upon a previous accumulated knowledge took the form of a practical syllogism, but it should be clear here that Ames deviated little from the teaching of the Angelic Doctor.

Despite the fact, as noted in the last chapter, that Ames was forced to leave England while yet a young man and prevented from reaching New England, he had a great following on both sides of the Atlantic. He has been called "der führende Theologe des erwachenden reformierten Pietismus"⁴. Many later Puritans who wrote tracts on the theme of conscience, particularly Dyke, Flavel and Norman, reveal an indebtedness to him.

There was not complete agreement among the Puritans on this

1. Loc. cit.
2. Ibid., Bk.I, 6.
3. Ibid., Bk.I, 3.
4. Cf. Karl Reuter, Wilhelm Amesius der führende Theologe des erwachenden reformierten Pietismus.

matter, however. Had they remained slavishly true to Aquinas, there would have been unanimity of thought on the subject; but some preferred Calvin¹ to the Scholastics, and for good reason. The schoolmen and Reformer agreed on the definition of conscience, as "science" or "knowledge", or more correctly, "knowledge with", but they differed as to its nature. Calvin, unencumbered by the traditional necessity to apply the categories of Aristotelian logic to every discussion, saw conscience as only one element: "the apprehension² which men have of things in their mind and understanding," - "the knowledge which acts as a medium between God and man ever drawing man, through the conviction of his sin, to God."³

One of those who favoured the Genevan Reformer was Ames's tutor⁴ Perkins. He tended away from any distinction between synteresis and conscientia. To him, conscience was simply "a kinde of actual knowledge in the minde of man" - "a natural power, faculty, or created qualitie, from whence knowledge and judgment proceede as effects;" its purpose being to combine man and God together "in the knowledge of one and the same secret"⁵. For Perkins and those who followed him - Sibbes, Thomas Goodwin, and Byfield, to name a few - the essence of conscience is knowledge, rather than knowledge and its application.

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1. Calvin's teaching on conscience is found in the Institutes, Bk. III, Chap. XIX, and Bk. IV, Chap. X.
 2. Institutes of the Christian Religion (7th American edn.), trans. John Allen, Bk. IV, Chap. X, 450.
 3. Ibid., Bk. III, Chap. XIX, 91.
 4. See John R. Tuffts, "William Perkins, 1558-1602, His Thought and Activity," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, New College, Edinburgh, 1952, for a fuller treatment of Perkins's understanding of conscience.
 5. Perkins, (A Discourse of Conscience), Works, I, 518.

There were some men, like Baxter, who refused to be limited to either tradition, preferring instead to choose the best of both. In his A Christian Directory he wrote: "Conscience is taken, 1. Sometimes for the act of self-knowing. 2. Sometimes for the habit. 3. Sometimes for the faculty, that is, for the intellect itself, as it is a faculty of self-knowing. In all these senses it is taken properly."¹

In the main, there is really little difference between the two traditions. Calvin recognized that the nature of conscience is knowledge and the office is judgement; while the schoolmen taught that the nature of conscience was both knowledge and judgement. The Thomist tradition, though challenged, seems to prevail throughout the entire² century, even among the followers of Calvin.

The Office of Conscience.

Having established so much, it is then possible for the Puritans to speak in detail of the office of conscience. Aquinas affirmed that, according as conscience is considered as synderesis or conscientia, it can be spoken of either as a witness, recognizing that we have done or not done something, or as a judge that something should or should not be done. As a judge it acts, on the one hand, to incite or bind, and, on the other hand, to excuse, accuse, or³ torment. Calvin, in calling conscience "a thousand witnesses" and⁴

1. Works, VI, 97

2. This is true of Caroline moral theology, too; cf. H.R. McAdoo, The Structure of Caroline Moral Theology and Thomas Wood, English Casuistical Divinity During the Seventeenth Century.

3. Summa, 79:13.

4. Institutes. Bk.III, Chap. XIX, 91.

recognizing it as the knowledge which forces men "as criminals¹ before the tribunal of the judge", stands as the direct link between the schoolmen and the Puritans.

Conscience: a witness to accuse or excuse

The English Puritans speak in similar language, but ^{they} most often credit ² Paul and not Calvin or Aquinas as their inspiration. Writes ³ Perkins: "The proper actions or duties of conscience are two-fold: to give testimonie or to give judgement, Rom.2.15." ⁴ Fenner puts it more succinctly: "the office and duty of conscience is to bear witness either with ourselves or against ourselves, accusing or ⁵ excusing ourselves or actions". Clarkson urges: "Listen unto conscience, it has light and power to make you know your sin... it hath the office of a witness... it hath also the authority of a judge."

Others were more dramatic, though they said the same thing. ⁶ Sibbes likened conscience to the judiciary: "There is a register to take notice of what we have done; ... there are witnesses;.... there is an accuser;... and there is the judge". ⁷ Thomas Gouge described it in terms chosen from the business world: "Then comes in conscience... with her books of accounts, her black and bitter roll, and shews thee thy old reckonings, and arrears, setting before thee the follies of

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1. Ibid., Bk. IV, Chap. X, 450.
 2. Romans 2:15 appears frequently in Puritan treatises on conscience. It is clear, however, from C.A.Pierce's excellent study of Conscience in the New Testament that the Puritan doctrine of conscience is not really Pauline.
 3. Works, I, 518
 4. Fenner, op.cit., p.16.
 5. The Works of David Clarkson, Nichol's Series of Standard Divines. Puritan Period, II, 215f.
 6. Works, III, 210.
 7. A Word to Sinners, and a Word to Saints (1677 edn.), p.35.

thy youth, the sins of thy riper years, and the iniquities of thy whole youth." "Conscience is a living book annexed to thy souls",¹ wrote Anthony Cade. He called it "Gods leager Ambassador, to put man in mind of his duty, observe what he doth, & to be a witness² unto God either with Man, or against him". While Bunyan, in his Holy War, compares it to the recorder of the town of Mansoul. He writes of him: "As for Mr. Recorder, before the town of Mansoul was taken he was a man well read in the laws of his King, and also a man of courage, and faithfulness, to speak truth at every occasion; and he had a tongue as bravely hung as he had an head filled with judgement."

It is obvious from the above, that the office of conscience was twofold: to accuse or to excuse. The effects of this office are quickly apparent. In the accused conscience will never be satisfied to "lye quiet" but will rage as fast against them, and dogge them to their graves".³ While to the innocent, "it gives⁴ Courage and Support" as well as "peace with God and confidence of⁵ approach unto him". What may not be so obvious is that the office of conscience was no mere post mortem. The Puritan was to submit himself to a rigid moral examination not only after he had done or not done something, but also before it. For Perkins, the testimony⁶ of conscience is "first, of the life past: secondly, of the life

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1. A Sermon of the Nature of Conscience which may well be termed, a Tragedy of Conscience, p.19.
 2. The Whole Works of John Bunyan, ed. George Offor, III, 261.
 3. Adams, Works, I, 234.
 4. (William Bates, God Is), The Morning Exercises at Cripple-Gate (1671 edn.), ed. Thomas Case, p.38.
 5. Owen, Works, IV, 312.
 6. Works, III, 513.

present, and to come." And because the function of conscience is a practical exercise, both Perkins and Ames and their disciples revived the old scholastic syllogism as being the best means of passing judgement on self.¹

The Practical Syllogism

Conscience functions, they taught, by means of a practical syllogism. The first or major premise is the synteresis or knowledge; the minor premise is the conscientia or judgement;² and the conclusion is the sentence. Perkins cites the case of a "murtherer":

Every murtherer is cursed, saith the minde:
Thou art a murtherer, saith conscience assisted by memorie.
Ergo, Thou art cursed, saith conscience, and so giveth her sentence

³ Ames gives two examples, the first is of everyman:

He that lives in sinne, shall dye:
I live in sinne;
Therefore, I shall dye.

The second is of Christian:

Whosoever believes in Christ, shall not dye but live:
I believe in Christ;
Therefore, I shall not dye but live.

⁴ The Presbyterian, Thomas Manton, more in the Calvinist than the Thomist tradition, explained its working in this manner:

1. See William T. Costello, The Scholastic Curriculum at Early Seventeenth-Century Cambridge, for an examination of the Aristotelian scholastic training and its effect upon the Cambridge Puritans. He demonstrates how this training accounted for the great degree of clarity and conviction evident in their writings and for the a priori argumentation, or syllogism, evident in their thinking, and prominent in their casuistry.
2. Works, I, 535
3. Ames, op.cit., Bk.I, 3
4. Works, IV, 154f.

Conscience supplieth three offices - of a rule, a witness, and a judge; and so, accordingly the act of conscience is threefold. There is συντηρησις or a right apprehension of the principles of religion; so conscience is a rule; there is συμετρίσις a sense of our actions compared with the rule or known will of God, or a testimony concerning the proportion or disproportion that our actions bear with the word; then, lastly, there is κρισις or judgment, by which a man applieth to himself those rules of Christianity which concern his fact or state. All these acts of conscience may be reduced into a syllogism or argument. As for instance: he that is wholly carnal hath no interest in Christ; there is the first act, knowledge: but I am wholly carnal; there is the second act, conscience: therefore I have no interest in Christ; there is the third act, judgment.

In short, they understood conscience to be the practical judgement that a man makes with God upon his own actions. They aimed, therefore, in their cure of souls, to instruct the synteresis in order that men might make the "right" judgements.

The Light of Conscience

This leads us to ask: What, for the Puritans, was the light of conscience? ¹ Fenner replies: "the light which conscience is directed to work by is knowledge", which "is twofold: 1. Of Gods law. 2. Of our selves". ² Flavel divides the knowledge "of Gods law" into "the light of natural reason, which is common" and "the light of scripture revelation, which is special". The Source of which is threefold: being "gathered from the Law of Nature, or from experience of God's providence, or from the Scriptures". ³ Now all agreed that every man, even the unregenerate, have the former light. ⁴ Samuel Annesley, grandfather to John Wesley, wrote: the unregenerate

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1. Fenner, op.cit., p.16,20.
 2. Works, IV, 272
 3. Nicholas Byfield, A Commentary or, Sermons Upon the Second Chapter of the First Epistle of Saint Paul, p.761.
 4. Quoted by McNeill in "Casuistry in the Puritan Age", Religion in Life, p.85

carry "a monitor in their bosom" and that, while they are "without the sunshine of the Scripture, yet they cannot blow out God's candle of conscience". But it is the latter more "excellent light" - "the light of the gospel which, compared with the light of natural reason is as the light of the sun to the dim-moon-light"¹ - which really binds the conscience of men.² Ames was quite clear on this: "Hence it is that the Law of God onely doth bind the Conscience of man. By the law of God wee understand that revealed will of God, whereof we have made mention: viz. as it doth also containe those things which are commanded in the gospel".³ Perkins agrees: "Therefore the word of God alone by an absolute and soveraigne power binds the conscience". This was later reiterated by both the Westminster Assembly and the Savoy Conference.⁴ The Confession of Faith proclaims: "God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are in anything contrary to his Word". It is this knowledge which forms the content of synteresis. It is easy to see, therefore, why the Puritan practice of catechizing was so popular and wide spread.⁵ It was the means, as John Norman suggests, to "store your Conscience,

1. Flavel, op.cit., IV, 273

2. Ames, op.cit., Bk.I, 6.

3. Works, I, 521.

4. The Confession of Faith etc., (1707 edn.), Chap.XX, Sect.II. The Assembly was indebted for this phrase, in essence at least, to Perkins: "hee is the onely Lord of the conscience, which created it, and governs it". Works, II, 27. G. R. Cragg's statement, that the Cambridge Platonists were the only seventeenth century group to maintain "that the legitimate seat of authority in religion is the individual conscience, governed by reason and illuminated by a revelation which could not be inconsistent with reason itself", reveals that he does not really understand the Puritan doctrine of conscience. From Puritanism to the Age of Reason, p. 47.

5. Cases of Conscience, p.38

that she have a stock and treasury of knowledge, a bank and habit of all necessary laws and rules of practice; that as a scribe instructed to the Kingdom, she may bring forth out of her treasury things both new and old, as any occasion offers. For how shall she be able to give rules, if she hath them not? or teach you, if her self be untaught?"

"The knowledge of ourselves is needful" too, says Fenner,¹ "else conscience cannot act". He clarifies himself in this way: "Though we know what Gods Law requireth and what not, what is good and what not, yet unlesse we know whether we go with it or against it, conscience cannot accuse or excuse". That is to say, as conscience could not function without a knowledge of God (there would be no major premise), so it cannot function without a knowledge of self, which is the minor premise. It is these two, knowledge of God and knowledge of self, which make up conscience, and which Puritan pastors urged their people to acquire.

The Kinds of Conscience.

The Puritan penchant for division and sub-division is no less apparent then when they come to catalogue the kinds of conscience. Taking their cue from Perkins they first distinguish between "good or badde" ones, or "good or evill" ones as Ames preferred to call them. As usual they found ample scriptural testimony for such a division: "...the conscience of all men by nature are polluted and defiled (Titus 1:15).... To this defiled conscience in Scripture

1. Fenner, op.cit., p.22

is opposite....a good conscience, I. Peter 3:16, I Tim. 3:9 a pure or clean, and that by the blood of Christ, Heb. 9:14, Heb. 13:18, Acts 24:16. And this kind of conscience only those that are regenerate have¹.

Good Conscience

In his treatise of Good Conscience, Dyke² affirmed that "the Conscience that is good, must be good with a double goodnesse, 1. With the goodness of Integrity. 2. With the goodness of Tranquillity." In saying this he was but echoing what most Puritans held. Ames³ first said it: "Conscience may be called good, either for its honesty and integrity, or for its quietnesse and peace". But Calvin⁴ had said it before him: "a good conscience is no other than inward integrity of heart".

The conscience is good with the "goodness of Integrity" in three ways. (1) When "it determines evill to be evill, and good to be good;"⁵ or, as Ames⁶ puts it: when it "sincerely judges that thing to be good, which God judgeth so; and that to be evill, which God judgeth evill". (2) When "it doth excuse for that which is good, and accuse for that which is evill"⁷. Perkins⁸ first suggested that this was the root meaning of a good conscience: "Good conscience is that which rightly according to God's word, excuseth and comforteth".

1. Burgess, op.cit., p.222f.

2. Dyke, op.cit., p.23

3. Ames, op.cit., Bk.I, 34

4. Institutes, Bk.III, Chap. XIX, 91.

5. Dyke, op.cit. p.24.

6. Ames, op.cit. Bk. I, 34.

7. Dyke, op.cit., p.25

8. Works, I, 538.

To which Ames concurred.¹ (3) When "it doth incite and urge us to doe good, and doth stay and hinder from evill"².

It is good with the "goodness of tranquility" when the conscience "is at Peace and doth not accuse us because it hath not wherewith to accuse us, either because not guilty of such an such a particular fact...or else because it is assured of pardon"³. A good conscience then, is one which is good by nature and in its function; that is, it knows the "Law of God" and rightly applies it.

Most moralists were content with this simple delineation of a good conscience. But a few, like Ames,⁴ acknowledged that there was also a conscience "honestly good", one "peacably good", and one both "honestly and peacably good". But it all boiled down to the simple fact that "good consciences...are only quiet ones, excusing and comforting".

Though one aim of their cure of souls was to instruct conscience in goodness, the Puritan pastor entertained no ideas that he could accomplish this end himself. For all agreed that conscience "is either good by creation or regeneration;"⁵ but since all men are sinners, there was no hope that their consciences retained the goodness of creation. They stood in need of regeneration.⁶ Ward, rather emphatically, tells how it is done: "if you ask what makes a good conscience, there is but one thing in the world will make it: 'the blood of Christ, once offered by his

1. Cf. Ames, op.cit., Bk.I, 34

2. Dyke, op.cit., p.26.

3. Dyke, op.cit., p.27

4. Ames, op.cit., Bk.I, 37.

5. Perkins, op.cit., I, 538

6. Ward, op.cit., III, 100f.

eternal Spirit, without fault, purgeth our consciences from dead works'. Heb.9:14". Ames¹ drew this out more clearly:

Conscience since the fall, or after sinne, is made good againe: 1. By the blood of Christ applyed through Faith, whereby the guilt, accusation, and condemnation of it are taken away, Heb.9:13,14 and 10:22. 2. By the vertue of the same blood, in repentance and sanctification of the spirit, I Tim. 1:5, Acts 15:8,9, whereby believers have a settled and constant purpose to serve God. 3. By the witnesses of the Spirit, whereby we are assured of the grace of God, not onely for the present, but also for the continuance of it, to the doing of every good works, Ephes. 1:18,14; Rom. 9:5; I Pet. 1:5,6.

To the unsure, and what Puritan was not, Dyke² suggested the following list of seven "markes and notes by which a good Conscience may be knowne". It is a worthy measure of a man and his conscience, a sure test of sanctification:

1. It is a good note of a good conscience, when a man makes conscience of all things, all duties, & all sins...To do good things, & not all, is no signe of good conscience.
2. To make conscience of small Duties, and small sinnes.
3. It loves and likes a Ministrie and such Ministers as preach and speake to the Conscience.
4. To doe good or abstaine from evill meere for conscience sake, is a note of a right good conscience indeede.
5. A good Conscience makes a man hold up his head even in the thickest of his enemies.
6. Now therefore a man that sets any store by a good conscience, will not part with the Peace or Integrity thereof upon any termes. He notes the goodnes of his Conscience farre above all earthly things, Wealth, libertie, wife, children, life, itself, all are vile, and cheape in comparison of it. And therefore a man of a good conscience will endure grief, & suffer any wrong to keepe his conscience good towards God.
7. The seventh and last note remains...Until this day, Constancy and perseverance in good, is a sure note of a good conscience.

The second mark suggests that the Puritans tended to be over

1. Ames, op. cit., Bk.I, 37f.
 2. Dyke, op. cit., p.87ff.

scrupulous, but this is not really the case. Joseph Alleine¹ warns against the tender treating "of the least sins", and Annesley² exhorts: "Do what possibly you can to get rid of your Scruples; but if you cannot get rid of them, act against them".

Had all men been regenerate, the practice of the cure of souls would have been a comparatively easy task; but many men were unregenerate, their conscience evil, and the pastor's work involved.

Evil Conscience

The types of evil conscience are infinite of variety, but conveniently divided by Perkins³ into two general groups: "dead" and "stirring". The former kind fails to perform the proper office of conscience altogether, and the latter functions only by disturbing and disquieting. Writes Owen⁴: "Conscience may be said to be evil on two accounts: (1) As it disquieteth, perplexeth, judgeth, and condemneth for sin....(2) On account of a vitiated principle in the conscience, - not performing its duty, but secure when it is filled with all unclean, vicious habits".

Some examples of a "dead" conscience are worth noting. By far the worst is the "seared" conscience, "cut off as it were with a chirguneon Instrument" and having "a kinde of crusty brownnesse, which is utterly insensible."⁵ A "stupid" conscience is not much better, for it only accuses and condemns "the greatest sinnes".⁶ The "benumbed" conscience, unlike the other two, attempts to

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1. (Divers Practical Cases of Conscience satisfactorily Resolved), Works (1752 edn.), II, 280.
 2. The Morning Exercises at Cripple-Gate, p.19.
 3. Works, I, 550.
 4. Works, VI, 512.
 5. Dyke, op.cit., p.38.
 6. Ames, op.cit., Bk.I, 43.

function, but it is "so dull and heavy in its Acts, that there¹ follows no strong stirrings of heart after it". The most dangerous, because of their insidious nature, are the "secure" and "ignorant" consciences. The latter by its "silence, ignorance, and vaine pretences doe justifie and tell all will be well enough;" while the former "heales the hurt of people with sweete words & cryes, peace, peace, where there is no peace"². Matthew Henry³ recalls that he often heard his father remark, that he pittied anyone with "a blind conscience which sees nothing, a dead conscience which feels nothing, and a dumb conscience which saith nothing". The elder Henry considered that person to be "in as miserable a condition as a man can be in, on this side of Hell".

The cause of a "dead" conscience was simple enough: "the Synteresis itselife, or Law of Conscience, hath its course stopped, & for a time is in a manner extinguished, Jude⁴ 10". The failure of synteresis meant the failure of conscience, for without a major premise there could be no practical syllogism. The signs of an evil conscience are obvious: (1) "If one reioyce in sinne. Prov. 2.14" (2) "If after he hath sinned he will not bee reformed. Prov. 27.22". (3) "If hee give up himselfe to commit knowne sinne, with all his might striving to sinne more then others. Ephe.⁵ 4.19."

Contrary to the "dead" conscience is a "stirring" one. It⁶ too is numerous in variety. Ames speaks of a "troubled" conscience,

1. Ibid., Bk. I, 42.

2. Dyke, op.cit., p.34

3. An Account of the Life and Death of Mr. Philip Henry (1765 edn.)p.248

4. Ames, op.cit., Bk.I, 43

5. Ibid., Bk.I, 44.

6. Loc. cit.



that "which accuseth in such a manner, that it suffereth not the Conscience to be at rest;" and a "desperate" one, that "which so accuseth and condemneth, that it taketh away not onely quietnes¹ and peace, but hope also of any quietnesse, or remedy". Henry Smith warns of a "gnawing" conscience which follows after sin and gnaws upon the heart. The most frequently mentioned, and most ministered to, conscience was the "doubting" one. It "hangeth in suspense" and "knoweth not which way to take: it knoweth not which is the sinne and which not."² The "doubting" conscience shall receive special attention later.

Doubt, or the lack of faith, was the cause of a "stirring" conscience, just as the lack of Scriptural knowledge was the cause of a "dead" conscience. Such a conscience makes this kind of syllogism:³

He that beleeveth not in Christ, is subject to the wrath of God:
But I beleeve not in Christ:
Therefore, I am subject to the wrath of God.

Now the argument is true, but the soul troubled. "The onely way", continues Ames,⁴ "to pacifie such a Conscience is, to bring him that is troubled, into another state, by true conversion and Faith. For then the Minor of that Syllogisme, which before was true, will be false, and may lawfully be denied".

We have already seen how a conscience is made good, now to see how "an evill Conscience may bee made good".⁵ Two things are

1. Cf. The Works of Henry Smith, Nichol's Series of Standard Divines. Puritan Period, I, 418.
2. Fenner, op.cit., p.41.
3. Ames, op.cit., BkI, 45.
4. Loc. cit.
5. Byfield, op.cit., p. 773ff.

necessary: "a right medicine to heale it," and "a right course in application of the medicine". The medicine "for the curing of an ill Conscience" is that previously noted, the "blood of Christ". For the right application of this medicine, four things are necessary: "First, the light of knowledge. Secondly, the washing of regeneration. Thirdly, the assurance of Faith, Fourthly, the warmth of love." It was the constant work of the Puritan ministry not only to resolve good consciences, temporarily disturbed, but also to offer the prerequisites of regeneration in order that evil consciences might become good ones.

Doubting Conscience and Its Rules

The most difficult conscience to guide was the doubting conscience, because, as Ames ¹ puts it, it "yeeldeth to neither part of the question in hand, but sticks and staggers betweene assent and dissent, not knowing which to doe". Now, there are two forms that practical ² doubt takes. The first, distinguished under the heading of perplexity but treated by the Puritans in their general discussion of doubt, presents itself like this: I find myself confronted by alternative courses of action, both of which seem to involve me in sin; sin is to be avoided; what then am I to do? The second doubt questions whether an opinion, law, or principle may truly be said to apply to the particular course or action being contemplated. Does it bind the individual to obedience, or is he left to the exercise of liberty? The Puritans had near at hand three ready

1. Ames, op.cit., Bk.I, 17.

2. I am indebted for this discussion to Kenneth E. Kirk, Conscience and Its Problems, p. 250ff.

solutions to these two forms of doubt: tutiorism, probabiliorism, and probabilism.

Tutiorism

Tutiorism was the name given to the rigorism of the Jensenists and others; it was made popular through Pascal's attack on probabilism in his Lettres Provinciales. Tutiorists taught that it is not lawful to follow even a most probable opinion in favour of liberty; or putting it another way, when uncertain as to whether a law obliges, never give yourself the benefit of the doubt, but always act as if the law does oblige.¹ When in doubt, they taught, take the safer course of action. Tutiorism was condemned by Alexander VIII,² 1690, but not altogether rejected by the Puritans.³

Ames writes: "In things doubtfull, the safest way is to be chosen, which if we follow, it is certaine we shall not sinne. As for example, a man doubteth whether Usury be lawfull or not? the safest way is to abstaine; for herein is no danger of sinning". Again, in discussing the doing of good works, he writes: "We are therefore to abstaine from all such things, about which (after due diligence used) the conscience is in doubt, whether they be lawfull or no".⁴ William Fenner⁵ advises: "When conscience doubted on the one part and is resolved on the other, we must refuse the doubting part and take that wherein we are certain and sure". He

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1. For a fuller discussion of tutiorism, probabilism and probabiliorism see the articles on "Probabilism" in The Catholic Encyclopaedia (1911 edn.) and the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (1918 edn.), ed. James Hastings, and K.E. Kirk, Conscience and Its Problems, pp.260-275.
 2. The Catholic Encyclopaedia, "Probabilism"
 3. Ames, op.cit., Bk.I, 18.
 4. Ibid., Bk.III, 87.
 5. Fenner, op.cit., p.41

mentions the dilemma of a card player. "When one doubteth of the lawfulness of playing at cards and dice; he is sure it is no sinne not to play, but whether he may lawfully play he doubted: in this case he is bound not to play". Dyke, in suggesting how to get and keep a good conscience, writes: when "in cases of a doubtful and questionable nature, be sure to take the surest side...that side on which thou mayest bee sure thou shalt not sinne". Matthew Henry writes of his father: "When his Opinion was asked about any doubtful Matter, as playing at Cards, the Marriage of Cousin-Germans, or the like, he was very cautious in determining such things to be sinful; but he would say, its good keeping on the safer side; and a man would not chuse to go upon a Precipice, when he might go upon even Ground, Prov.4:9". Baxter counsels: "First use your utmost diligence (as much as the nature of the cause requireth) to be resolved: and if yet you doubt, be sure to go the safer way". Joseph Alleine says: "Do nothing of things sacred without Gods command; nothing in things civil without Gods allowance". The instruction of Samuel Annesley, Cripple-gate lecturer, is: "About lesser matters this rule commonly holds good, viz. 'In things doubtful, take the safest course!'"

As these examples show the Puritans stood in the rigorist's tradition and were practising tutorists.

1. Dyke, op.cit., p.84

2. Henry, op.cit., p.250

3. Works, VI, 313

4. Works, II, 318.

5. The Morning Exercise at Cripple-Gate, p.16.

Probabiliorism

Further inquiry, though, shows that it would be a mistake to infer from these passages that the Puritan casuists adhered to the strict tutorist position. It is implicit from the above qualifying phrases like "after due diligence used" and "First use your utmost diligence", that the "safer way" is known only after diligent inquiry; and to follow it, means not giving the benefit of the doubt to the law

(the principle of tutorism), but to the more impressive probabilities, whether on the side of law or liberty. This is made explicit by Ames:¹ "Using all diligence to be certaine (though we be not) it is lawfull in many things to follow that opinion which is most probable". It is their general opinion that it would be an intolerable rule to insist that one always give the benefit of doubt to the law except when we are certain, beyond all reasonable possibility of error,² that what we do is permissible.

It seems clear that the Puritan moralists were more on the side of probabiliorism.³ That is, when, in any particular instance, inquiry revealed the greater weight of probability to be against the application of the law, they would allow the individual to have the benefit of the doubt and be free to follow the opinions in favour of liberty. They applied this principle to the formulation of specific rules designed to aid those in doubt.

Perkins's⁴ rules for the keeping of the Decalogue are: (1) "When two commandements of the morall law are opposite in respect

1. Ames, op.cit., Bk.I, 16.

2. cf. Thomas Wood, op.cit., p.76.

3. The opinion, also, of Kenneth E. Kirk, Conscience and Its Problems and Thomas Wood, English Casuistical Divinity during the Seventeenth Century.

4. Works, I, 519-521.

of us; so as we cannot do them both at the same time; the lesser commandment gives place to the greater, and doth not binde or constrain for that instant." He poses the hypothetical case of "a whole towne" on fire on the Sabbath Day to demonstrate what he means in this rule. The fourth commandment prescribes rest, but the sixth requires that everyone help in saving his neighbour's life and goods. Which of these two commandments are the town's people to obey? The answer is: "the fourth commandment at this time is to give place, and the sixth commandment alone bindes the conscience: so as then (if need should require) a man might labour all the day without offense to God." (2) the second rule is: "When God gives some particular commandment to his people, therein dispensing with some other commandment of the morall law, for that time it bindes not." The Scriptures abound in illustrations of this principle, as for instance, when Abraham is about to kill his son Isaac at God's personal command even though the sixth commandment expressly forbids such an act. (3) The final rule reads: "One and the same commandment in some things binds the conscience more straightly, & in doing some other things lesse". This is a convenient excuse for omitting the practice of certain Biblical injunctions given to the ancient Hebrews, but now difficult or impossible to keep.

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In his chapter "Of a surmising and doubting Conscience," Ames urges that in all our actions we should aim for "a certaine and settled judgement without all doubting". As an aid to this end he suggests the following five rules:

1. Ames, op.cit., Bk.I, 16.

- (1) In such things as are necessarie to salvation, and Gods worship, no opinion can be sufficient, though it have never so great certainty of reason.
- (2) In such things which are more remote from their principles, diligent care is to be had, that we also get a certaine perswasin, or believe of them, out of the Scriptures; but if that cannot be obtained, it is lawfull in our actions to follow some such opinion, as is certaine and tried by the rule of Scripture.
- (3) Using also all diligence to bee certaine (though we be not) it is lawful in many things to follow that opinion, which is most probable.
- (4) It is never lawfull to goe against our owne opinion, whether it be certaine, or probable, for respect to other mens authority.
- (5) No man can at the same time have two contrary probable opinions, concerning the same thing; so as he may lawfully leave the one, and follow the other.

¹
Baxter's sixteen rules for the aiding of the doubtful conscience are lengthy and involved, and in them, we see both the tutiorist and the probabiliorist. He writes for those who are faced with the dilemma, on the one side, of doing nothing against conscience, and on the other, of omitting all duty because conscience doubts of its lawfulness. The essence of his position is: "I must with greatest caution avoid the greatest sin, when I am out of hope of avoiding all". In things indifferent, the matter is simple enough, "nothing must be done that conscience doubteth of, because there is a possibility or fear of sinning on the one side, but none on the other: and in that case, it is a certain sin to venture on a feared sin". In matters of gross evils, which are known by all to be sins, "there is no room for any doubting, whether we must do that good which cannot be done without that sin; it being certain that no such good can be a duty". Uncertainty or perplexity, as to the omitting of a duty in favour of the committing of a possible sin, is another matter. Rule VI reads: "it is a greater sin to venture

doubtfully upon the committing of a positive sin that is great (in case it proves a sin), than upon the omitting a duty which (in case it prove a duty) is less; and on the contrary, it is worse to venture on the omitting of a great duty, than on the committing of a small, positive sin". In such cases of uncertainty, the greater sin is always that one which the "doubting conscience doth most strongly suspect to be sin, in its most impartial deliberation". But, "if the duty to be omitted, and the sin to be committed, seem equal in greatness, and our doubt be equal as to both, it is commonly held safer to avoid the commission more studiously than the omission".

Probabilism

In adopting both the tutiorist and probabiliorist positions, our casuists remained loyal to the medieval tradition; but, at the same time, they rejected the odious formula for the treatment of doubt known as probabilism. It had been made the vogue by the Jesuits, and has been defined as "the moral system according to which, when there are divergent views as to the lawfulness of an action, for each of which solid arguments may be advanced, then, provided the lawfulness be alone in question, we are under no obligation to follow the more probable of the two views, but are¹ equally free to adopt either course". What Caroline moral theologians understood by probabilism and how decisively they rejected it, is² demonstrated by Jeremy Taylor. He wrote of it: "if an opinion or

1. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, X, 348-350.

2. Ductor Dubitantium, Bk.I, Pt. I, c.11, 7. I am indebted to Wood, op.cit. p. 78, for this quotation.

speculation be probable it may in practice be safely followed". All that is required to make an opinion probable, he continues, is said to be the opinion of any one grave doctor. He hints, and this is the main cause of the rejection of probabilism, that there are so many probable opinions to choose from that it is possible to do almost exactly as one will and yet remain safe.

Summary

In Puritan thought, the conscience was the meeting point between God and man, between theology and ethics. It is the implanted witness of God and the practical judgement of self. As such, it is both axiological and teleological, that is, it makes known to men God's judgement in the present as well as in the future. The right functioning of conscience demands a synteresis which knows the Law of God, that which binds conscience, and a conscientia which knows the self, so that the law can be properly applied. The conscience of a man not so blessed is doomed to failure, and there were many not so blessed. Regeneration is the only assurance against an evil conscience, but it is no ^ug~~ar~~antee of a good conscience. This is only available to the regenerate man who continually strives after knowledge, knowledge of God and knowledge of self. But even where there is knowledge, there can also be doubt. The doubting conscience was helped, too, by the application of the principles of probabiliorism and tutorism to daily conduct.

In the next section we shall examine two methods by which pastors instructed the conscience; noting at the same time, some of the more pressing problems disturbing seventeenth century consciences.

CHAPTER III

CATECHIZING

Introduction

Having now noticed, in an introductory way, that the Puritan practice of the cure of souls was aimed at the conscience, we direct our attention to their instruction of conscience through catechizing. The purpose of catechizing was the instruction of the synteresis, ideally, but not exclusively, during the formative years.

Before turning our attention to this practice, the defining of several cognate terms which frequently appear in this chapter seems in order.¹ The term catechizing is used to describe the oral religious instruction so ubiquitous during the seventeenth century. It is a derivative of the Greek κατηκεῖν, itself derived from κατηκεῖν, meaning "to resound, to sound amiss, to din in, instill, teach or instruct orally." As these definitions imply, and as shall be noted later, it is a distinctive and special type of oral instruction. The practitioners of this art are called catechists, without regard to whether they are cleric or lay catechists; although most of the catechists treated in this study are ministers. The ancient term catechumen is applied to those catechized. The elementary treatises used in the exercise of catechizing are called catechisms. Finally, the term catechesis is used of the method of instruction; and the terms,

1. All definitions are taken from A New English Dictionary, ed. James A.H. Murray, Vol. II.

catechetic and catechetical, of the content of instruction.

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part treats of the theory of catechizing, touching upon the principles, form and content of the Puritan catechesis and catechetics. The second part deals with the practice of catechizing and those who conducted the catechesis.

The Theory of Catechizing

It is hoped that this discussion will demonstrate those catechetic qualities which Puritanism held in common with all the Church as well as those which are unique to themselves, for Puritan catechizing reveals a purposeful blending of both.

Principles of the Puritan Catechesis and Catechetics

These principles seem to stand out. First, every human being is recognized as having a natural gift for the formation of a Christian character. The Puritans saw the conscience, the link between God and man, as that gift. They recognized that it needed to be instructed, developed and guided, if it was truly to witness to God in man, enabling man to make mature and right ethical and moral decisions. Perkins, in the preface to his catechism, The Foundation of Christian Religion (1590), after criticizing the popular notion that the mere recitation of religious formulary was sufficient spiritual exercise, urges his readers: apply the Commandments, Creed, and Lord's Prayer, "inwardly to your heart and conscience, and outwardly to your lives and conversation." Baxter,¹ considerably later, writes a not dissimilar

1. MSS Baxter, II, 249.

instruction to the minister at Newington, Surrey, Thomas Wadsworth: "I advise & entreat you to fall to it [catechizing] presently with all yo^r might; use what catechisme you thinke meete, but see y^t you take all yo^r Parish psonally man by man in private as we do, & prudently & seriously sett it home upon their consciences".

Secondly, they subscribed to the now accepted theory that the earlier the training, the more permanent and lasting the results. In all their catechetic writing they are conscious of the need to be simple, clear, and direct. Whenever they felt that a catechism was not simple enough for the littlest children they wrote a more simplified version. Not too infrequently, we find pastors publishing such graduated catechisms in one volume, even as the Westminster Assembly did.

Thirdly, in accordance with Mosaic teaching,¹ the Puritans held the family and its extension, the Church, to be the ideal nursery. Catechizing was both a Church function, conducted by the pastor, and a family affair. With few exceptions, most catechisms are dedicated to heads of households and parents. Many pastors, following Baxter's example, conducted their catechesis on a family basis.

Fourthly, the Puritans favoured the memorizing of catechisms,² but with two reservations. Memorization was never to take the place of, or become a substitute for, understanding. During a

1. Deuteronomy 6:7.

2. Cf. Baxter, Works, II, 99.

discussion on the floor of the Assembly concerning the first draught of the catechism, Stephen Marshall raised the fear held by many that "people will come to learn things by rote, and can answer it as a parrot, but not understand the thing."¹ Memorization was only to be made of things essential and not of the minutia. Carruthers writes of those who wrote the Shorter Catechism: "It is evident from the nature of the proofs, and from the extent of some of them, that the Divines did not contemplate their being committed to memory by the catechumens."² Proofs, though essential to a catechism, were not considered necessary to be memorized by the catechumen. On the other hand, the essence of catechetical teaching was considered essential. It is not surprizing, therefore, to find Robert Horne taking great pains to put the Ten Commandments into rhyme for "the use of the weakest."³ His finished product reads:

1. Thou shalt have no Gods but one;
2. And truly worship him alone.
3. Gods name in vaine thou shalt not take
4. The seventh day holy thou shalt make;
5. Honour thy Parents;
6. Murther flee;
7. A fornicator never be;
8. Thou shalt not steal;
9. False speech eschue;
10. And covet not anothers due.

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1. Alex. F. Mitchell and John Struthers, Editors, Minutes of the Sessions of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, p. 92.
 2. S. W. Carruthers, Three Centuries of the Westminster Shorter Catechism, p. 15.
 3. Points of Instruction for the Ignorant: With an Examination before coming to the Lords Table: And a Short Direction for spending time well (1613).

The fifth principle concerns the object and benefits of catechizing. The Puritans held the two to be one, namely the implanting of knowledge for the spiritual maturing of the soul. Their object in catechizing was threefold: (1) to make the catechumen morally responsible; the Puritans, more than any other catechetical writers stress the Ten Commandments; (2) to prepare the novice for the Lord's Supper and membership in the community of the saints; and (3) to direct him to the Lord of life. The similar benefits are four in number: conversion, or the "recovering their souls from the power of the Devil;"¹ sanctification, "the most orderly building up of those that are converted, and the establishing them in the Faith;"² education, so that "it will make our public preaching to be better understood and regarded,"³ and be "a notable means to free them from errors and heresies;"⁴ and the familiarization of the pastor with his people, so that he will be better able to minister to them.

Finally, Puritan pedagogy was sound in these several general principles. (1) It was adapted as much as possible to the capacity of the learner. (2) It taught the young catechumens to ask the right questions. True, the Puritans falsely assumed that the right questions centered about man's duty rather than the person and work of Christ,⁵ but within the framework of their theology, their questions were legitimate.

1. Owen Stockton, A Treatise of Family Instruction, p. 42.

2. Baxter, (The Reformed Pastor), Works, XIV, 250. Cf., also, Downname, A Guide to Godlynesse, pp. 328-340.

3. Baxter, op. cit., XIV, 251. Cf., also, Downname, loc. cit.

4. Downname, loc. cit.

5. Cf. Thomas F. Torrance, The School of Faith, p. xviii, xxv.

(3) Professor Torrance, in his edition of the Reformation catechisms,¹ states: "It belongs to the essence of good education to hold together the realm of the image and the realm of the idea." The Puritans, by teaching doctrine from a very early age, did just this.² It may truly be questioned whether a great deal of the modern Sunday School material, with its emphasis upon imagery and stories rather than ideas and doctrine, is an adequate substitute for catechetical writing. (4) It schooled the young learner in the elements of the Christian faith, beginning with creation and concluding with eternal life, in order to prepare him to grasp later for himself, the teaching of the New Testament. Of course, as Torrance³ points out, neither the Puritan catechisms nor the Reformation ones go far enough; too few of the great moments in the Heilsgeschichte are singled out. (5) Instruction was always received in social groups, for the Puritans realized the impossibility of learning outside the community of believers.

Puritan instruction was also sound in at least three other particulars which are derived from the very substance of the Christian faith. They have already been mentioned, but are worth repeating: it required on the part of the believer a response of self-criticism; it aimed at conversion; and it purposed renewal and growth in the soul of the believer. The two alarming weaknesses in their Christian pedagogy was that they often failed to

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1. Torrance, op. cit., p.xxviii.
 2. Cf., e.g., Heywood's comment, that at a very early age his mother instructed him "in the deep points of divinity, the fall in Adam, the corruption of our nature, subjection to the curse, redemption by Christ, the necessity of regeneration, the immortality and worth of the soul, the weigh and concernment of eternity," Hunter, The Rise of the Old Dissent, p.31.
 3. Torrance, op. cit., p. xx.

confront the catechumen with Christ and to demonstrate the Spirit.

Catechetical Writing: Analysis of Form

Aided by the printing press and motivated by a desire to spread religious knowledge, the Puritans flooded the century with their catechetical writings.¹ Most of their works followed a quite definite pattern, which shall be outlined here.

They begin with a Dedication followed by an Epistle to the Reader. Dedication is usually made to the writer's own congregation, but this is not always the case. Often, a patron or one of the nobility is singled out. Occasionally, as with James Balmford's catechism, the dedication is addressed to a special group. Balmford was a carpenter's son and so dedicated his work "To the Right Worshipfull, the Master, Wardens, Assistants, and whole company of Carpenters in London". The Dedication served more as a means of raising interest in the book than as a genuine tribute; although, of course, it did this, too.

The Epistle, addressed to the reader, usually contains catechizing instructions and helps which the writer thinks necessary to make. He presupposed two distinct groups of readers. The first comprises ministers, heads of households, and parents. The catechesis is for their benefit. The second group, catechumens and other readers, are offered practical helps for the best use of the catechism.

The catechism or catechisms appear next. The decision of the

1. See Appendix B for a chronological list of many of the Puritan catechisms. All catechisms mentioned in this section are to be found in this appendix.

Westminster Assembly to "prepare a draught of two Catechisms, one more large and another more brief,"¹ was, as already noted, in the best Puritan tradition and Reformation tradition. Luther had published two together, a larger and smaller, so also had Craig; so, too, did many of the Puritans. Sometimes, as is the case with Doolittle's A Plain Method of Catechizing (1698), the initial catechism served only as an introduction to catechizing. More usually, however, the first of the two catechisms was simpler and shorter and meant for the littler children, the larger was intended for the older children and adults; the two catechisms differing only in degree, and not in kind or substance. Owen's Two Short Catechisms (1645) are a good example. He writes in the preface: "the Lesser Catechism may be so learned of the younger sort, that they may be ready to answer to every question thereof" and "the Greater will call to mind much of what hath been taught you in public, especially concerning the Person and Offices of Jesus Christ." Occasionally, as with Baxter's The Catechising of Families (1683), a third catechism, "for those that have learned the two first," is added. He believed that there should be three degrees of catechisms, "suited to the childhood, youth, and maturer age of Christians."²

The catechism format is always question and answer. The Puritans preferred the erotematic³ method to the more ancient

1. Mitchell and Struther, op. cit., p. 321.

2. Works, XIX, 4.

3. From the Greek ερωταειν meaning "to ask". J.J. Van Oosterzee, Practical Theology, trans Maurice J. Evans, p. 488, states that this method was first used by the Waldensians.

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acrostic scheme, as did all the Reformers, because it was better suited to the teaching of young children. The questions are usually simple, interrogatory sentences intended simply to introduce the answer. When possible, they correspond to the general statements found in the Creed, Ten Commandments and Lord's Prayer. The answers are of three types. In the first type, the question is followed by a verse or more taken directly from the Scriptures. Catechetic writings of this type are generally called "Scriptural Catechisms". In the second type, the answer is a complete statement of Scriptural truth re-written or re-phrased, and standing completely independent of the question. It may, or may not, be followed by Scripture proofs. This is by far the most popular type answer, and the one finally adopted by the Westminster Assembly. The third type is really of two varieties. In the one, the answer is a simple "Yes" or "No." In the other, there is a double set of answers and questions. The first set is similar to the second type above. The second set breaks up the statements of the first by a series of questions answered by "Yes" or "No." The best example of this type is Palmer's catechism. There was a great deal of mixed feeling regarding his method as evidenced by the discussion it evoked on the floor of the Assembly.² The Scottish Commissioners, Rutherford and Gillespie, approved of it; but many of the English ones, particularly Marshall, Bridge, Herle, and Reynolds, did not. They objected to this method

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1. From the Greek ἀκροαμα meaning "to hear". This method was the one most frequently employed in the Early Church.
 2. Mitchell and Struthers, op.cit., pp.91-94.

for two reasons: a Yes or No answer provides no religious knowledge, and such answers render a catechism useless as a religious directory. Despite these objections, Wallis, in 1648, published the Shorter Catechism according to Palmer's plan and it proved very popular, if the number of imitators are a good criterion.

Occasionally, the catechetical publication closes with prayers and an index. The former is intended as an aid to catechizing, and the latter is inserted as a help to the using of the catechism.

Following the publication of the Shorter Catechism, in 1647, a sharp decline is noted in the number of catechisms printed, but not in catechetical writing.¹ With such an excellent catechism² near at hand, few pastors deemed it necessary to attempt another. Instead, they turned their attention to the writing of expositions³ upon it. These fall more or less into three general types. The first is the glossary type, initiated by Wallis. This is supplemented by the paraphrase form, in which the glossary definition is actually inserted into the answer. The second type is the method of supplementary questions, also begun by Wallis, and to which we have just referred above. Finally, there is the commentary method, which includes lectures, sermons and even systems of divinity.

1. See Appendix B.
2. Baxter said of it: "it is the best catechism that ever I yet saw". Alexander Mitchell, Catechisms of the Second Reformation, p. xxxvi
3. Cf. S. W. Carruthers, Three Centuries of the Westminster Shorter Catechism, p. 7.

Catechetical Writing: Content

From the fourth century on, the instruction of catechumens in the faith comprehended the memorizing and explanation of the Apostles' Creed, Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer. These, along with the sacraments, form the common basis, as well, of the Reformation catechisms of Luther, Calvin, Heidelberg, Nowell and even Trent. With only an occasional omitting of the Creed, this is also the common basis of most Puritan catechisms.

The period of English Puritan catechetical writing can be divided, for convenience's sake, into two almost equal periods: William Perkins to the Westminster Assembly, circa 1590-1643-7, and the Shorter Catechism to the death of Matthew Henry, 1647-1714. There were, of course, Puritan catechists and catechetical writers both before and after these dates, but the most significant writing is done during these two periods.

All of the catechisms of the first period give an account of Christian doctrine, and then go on to speak about God's Law and the Lord's Prayer, that is, about Christian obedience and worship. The earlier ones are patterned after the six principles' outline used by Perkins. The later ones are generally only adaptations or enlargements of this same basic outline.

The six principles are:

- (1) God, which includes a section on His knowledge and works of creation and providence. Those catechisms which expound the Creed place that exposition here.
- (2) Man, a discussion of his threefold estate, with special reference to his Fall and need of salvation.

- (3) Christ, a discussion of his nature and three offices.
- (4) Partaking of Christ, an exposition of faith and the Ten Commandments, that is the Covenant of Grace and the Covenant of Works.
- (5) The Means for Obtaining Faith, a discussion of the ordinances, i.e. preaching, the sacraments, and prayer, involving an exposition of the Lord's Prayer.
- (6) Estate of all Men after Death, a discussion of death, the last judgement, heaven and hell.

The catechisms of Balmford, Bernard, Hieron, Horne, Jacobs, as well as those of Boyes, Denison, and Vesey, to name a few, follow this same outline. The latter writers differ from the former, however, in that they include an exposition of the Apostles' Creed.

Only about half of the Puritan catechisms include the Creed. More of the earlier moderate Puritans expound it than the later Nonconformists; but it is difficult to generalize about this, for example, Perkins does not treat of it and Baxter does. The Westminster Assembly debated the issue of including it in their catechisms,¹ the Scottish Commissioners contending for it;² but the Assembly determined to retain it only as a postscript.³ It is not easy to say why there was not unanimous acceptance of the Creed, but several reasons are plausible. It is not Scriptural; and whenever possible, except in the Westminster catechisms themselves, the Puritans preferred a Biblical mode of expression. Secondly, it is

1. Mitchell and Struthers, op. cit., p. 490.
 2. Cf. H.J. Wotherspoon and J.M. Kirkpatrick, A Manual of Church Doctrine, revised by T.F. Torrance and Ronald Selby Wright, p.64.
 3. Cf. William Carruthers, The Shorter Catechism, for facsimile of the first edition including the Creed as a postscript.

not moralistic, and it was morals that the Puritans were attempting to instill. Finally, it was held to have been polluted by Roman usage.¹

Other catechisms of this first period, such as those from the pens of William Gouge, Samuel Crooke, and Herbert Palmer, although more involved in their presentation, nevertheless, show a marked similarity to the six principles' scheme.

The second period of Puritan catechetical writing was completely dominated by the Shorter Catechism.² The account of its origins and history is a thrice told tale and scarcely needs mention here,³ except for a brief summary of findings: (1) it is an English Puritan rather than a Scottish Presbyterian document;⁴ (2) it is indebted to many of the catechisms of the first period of Puritan catechetical writing;⁵ (3) it is a summary of the Assembly's Confession of Faith;⁶ (4) it is Calvinistic in theology; and (5) it has played a greater role in the formation of Christian character in English speaking lands than any other single religious writing.

Its 107 short questions and answers are more easily outlined

1. Cf. Horton Davies, The Worship of the English Puritans, Appendix C, pp. 273-277.
2. The effect of the Larger Catechism on catechetical writing, as well as its development, contents and theology, is still untold.
3. Cf. Alexander F. Mitchell, Catechisms of the Second Reformation (1886), William Carruthers, The Shorter Catechism (1897), and S.W. Carruthers, Three Centuries of the Westminster Shorter Catechism (1957).
4. This is admitted even by William Campbell, The Triumph of Presbyterianism, who gives much of the credit for the formation of the Westminster Standards to the Scottish Commissioners.
5. Cf. Mitchell, op. cit., for a list of these catechisms.
6. Cf. Mitchell and Struthers, op. cit., p. 321, January 14, 1646-7: "Upon a motion made by Mr. Vines, it was Ordered - 'That the Committee for the Catechism...have an eye to the Confession of Faith....'"

than one might at first suspect possible, reflecting a more basic affinity to the six principles' scheme than heretofore noticed. The two are compared in the following table.

TABLE 1

THE OUTLINES OF THE SIX PRINCIPLES AND THE SHORTER CATECHISM COMPARED

<u>The Six Principles</u>	<u>The Shorter Catechism</u>
	A. Introduction, Q. 1-3
	B. Man's Belief Concerning God and Himself, Q. 4-38
1. God	1. God, Q. 4-12
2. Man	2. Man, Q. 13-20
3. Christ	3. Christ, Q. 21-38
	C. Man's Duty, Q. 39-107
4. Partaking of Christ	1. The Moral Law, Q. 40-84
a. the Moral Law	2. Means of Salvation
	Q. 85-107
b. Faith	a. Internal Means: Faith and Repentance, Q. 85-87
5. The Means for Obtaining Faith	b. Outward Means: Word, Sacraments and Prayer, Q. 88-107

The only section of the six principles' not found in the Shorter Catechism is the final one, "Estate of Man After Death". It is given cursory treatment in several questions, however, especially numbers 19, 38 and 84.

The Shorter Catechism, states Hodge,¹ is built upon two corner stones, as revealed by its first two questions and answers. The first is the recognition of "the religious nature and endowments of man and the validity of his moral and spiritual intuitions." The second is, that "God has spoken to man directly, and that his Word is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament." As has already been noted, these two foundation stones are deeply rooted in the Puritan catechetical theory. They are also woven throughout the entire fabric of the Assembly's catechism and account for its distinctive qualities and characteristics, namely: its moralistic tone; its clear, precise and simple language; its appeal to the individual sinner and help for the individual believer; and the fact that it is an excellent summary of Christian doctrine.

It has its limitations, however, especially when compared with the Reformation catechisms. Professor Torrance points out four of these:² it is less universal in teaching because it fails to keep to a Biblical mode of expression; it is less Christological in content and outlook; it is more rationalistic preferring to expound Christian doctrine from the point of view of a particular school of thought, that of Federal Theology; and its focus of attention is upon man's appropriation of salvation through justifying faith, whereas the focus of attention of the Reformation catechisms is directed toward the incarnate Word. Despite

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1. A.A. Hodge and J. Aspinwall Hodge, The System of Theology Contained in the Westminster Shorter Catechism, p. 8f.
 2. Torrance, op. cit., pp. xvi-xx.

these obvious deficiencies, one cannot help but agree with Schaff,¹ that "the Shorter Catechism is one of the three typical catechisms of Protestantism which are likely to last to the end of time."

Although it dominated the second half of the century, it was not the only catechism written in this period.² Doolittle, Thomas Gouge, Baxter and Bunyan, to name but a few, turned their attention to catechetical writing. The catechisms of the first two men show a marked agreement with the Shorter Catechism.³ Bunyan's Instruction for the Ignorant is a notable departure from it. His editor writes: "This little catechism is upon a plan perfectly new and unique.... This is the first book of this class that was composed upon the broad basis of Christianity, perfectly free from sectarian bias or peculiarity."⁴ The plan is: (1) God and Sin; (2) Confession of Sin; (3) Faith in Christ; (4) Prayer; (5) Self-Denial; and (6) Conclusion. Bunyan's purpose was to awaken sinners rather than to mature saints. Under the influence of Spener, this became the dominant theme of all later seventeenth and early eighteenth century Evangelical religious writing.

We have already mentioned that most of the catechetical writing of this second period was confined to the writing of expositions upon the Shorter Catechism, and what ever has been said of that

1. Philip Schaff, A History of the Creeds of Christendom, p. 787.
2. See Appendix B.
3. S. W. Carruthers, Three Centuries of the Westminster Shorter Catechism, includes them in his biographical section of "Everything with any relation to the Shorter Catechism...."
4. Works, II, 675-690.

work applies equally to these.

It is appropriate here to say a word about the theology of the Puritan catechisms.¹ It is distinguished by three outstanding features. First, it is thoroughly Calvinistic. What Campbell² says of the work of the Westminster Assembly is also true of most Puritan catechists: they anathematised Arminianism, ostracised Amyraldism, and found a convenient formula to embrace both supralapsarian and infralapsarian Calvinism. A comparison of the contents of their catechisms with Heppe's Reformed Dogmatics demonstrates just how much they were in agreement with Reformed Calvinism.

Secondly, their theology is dialogical, that is, it is concerned with presenting the address of the Word of God so as to elicit a response of faith. The chief purpose of their catechizing was the presentation of the Word of God, the chief benefit, conversion. It may be justifiably argued, however, that they tend to be slightly more anthropocentric than theocentric or Christocentric. That is, they appear to give man, and man's appropriation of salvation, more space than they give Christ the Mediator and Redeemer. This is especially true of the Westminster catechisms, which are more dialectical than dialogical; that is, they are more a systematic treatment of theology than a true conversation between God and man.³ This tendency to be anthropocentric and dialectic ought not to be surprising. For in their

1. See Hodge, op. cit., and Edward D. Morris, Theology of the Westminster Symbols, for a nineteenth century interpretation of the theology of the Shorter Catechism.

2. Cf. Campbell, op. cit., p. 139.

3. Cf. Torrance, op. cit., p. xlix.

catechizing, as we have seen, the Puritans began with man, especially man in his physical and spiritual infancy, and directed his whole interest toward God by systematic instruction in doctrine and morals. As the seventeenth century merged into the succeeding ones, there was an even more marked turning of attention inward upon the self, resulting in a greater emphasis upon subjectivity and religious experience. But it is always hoped, and here the Puritans would agree, that the Word of God might be so emphasized that man will be called back to dialogue with God.

Finally, their catechisms are set within the framework of the Federal Theology, of which the Larger Catechism is an excellent example.¹ Federal Theology tended to systematize the Covenant idea.² The Covenant came to be divided into two, the Covenant of Grace and the Covenant of Works. Equal emphasis was placed upon the response of faith and the response of obedience, i.e., the Ten Commandments, Sacraments and Prayer. Professor Torrance states that the main weakness of the Federal Theology is that it leaves no room for the Holy Spirit.³ Yet, as Nuttall has so ably demonstrated, the Puritans had room for the Spirit.⁴ Why then, did they adhere to this theology? It was not, as Perry Miller⁵

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1. This incorporation of the Federal Theology in English Catechetical writing is first seen clearly in Ames's The Chiefe Heads of Divinitie (1612); a copy of this catechism is to be found in the New College, Edinburgh Library, but is not listed in the S.T.C. Geoffrey F. Nuttall, Visible Saints, p. 76, points out that Ames greatly influenced Johannes Cocceius, his successor at Franeker and the leading continental exponent of the Federal Theology.
 2. For this subject, see Perry Miller, The New England Mind: the seventeenth century, Appendix B.
 3. Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. lxiiff.
 4. The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience. Cf., also, Robert Wheatley, "Immediacy in Radical Puritanism," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, New College, University of Edinburgh, 1957.
 5. Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 384f.

points out, because they believed in the Covenant of Works as the condition of salvation, and therefore denied the importance of Christology; but because they recognised that the Law, which had been the condition of that Covenant, still remained in effect as the rule of life and manners, as the schoolmaster to teach the new goal of the Covenant of Grace and to direct souls to Christ.

We turn our attention now from the theory of catechizing to the practice, from catechisms to catechists.

The Practice of Catechizing

We shall look first at the catechists of the century and then at the methods they employed in their catechizing.

Catechists

During the seventeenth century, the English Puritans, both clergy and laity, were noted for their devotion to catechetical exercises. A thorough searching through the biographies of the period has revealed that the number of Puritan catechists was legion.¹

Among the early ones, these names stand out: Perkins, catechist of his college and, as already observed, spiritual father of the Cambridge Puritans; Andrew Willet, one of the first to realize the importance and necessity of catechizing the whole parish; John Boyes, whose example of rewarding the poor in his parish for attendance at catechetical lectures began an oft

1. See Appendix A for a list of Puritan catechists and the place of their ministry. All quotations and facts appearing in this section, unless otherwise stated, are documented in this appendix.

repeated practice; Richard Bernard, who had "an excellent faculty in catechizing" and who wrote four catechisms that found their way into print; Robert Bolton, famed as a catechizer of youth; Richard Rhodes, chaplain to Lady Margaret Hoby, and noted Lenten catechist; Elkanah Wales, to whose credit it is recorded that he never missed a Sunday catechetical lecture during his entire ministry; and Stephen Egerton, who while minister at Blackfriars, London, established a catechetical tradition which was continued by his more famous assistant, William Gouge, and by Gouge's assistant, William Jenkyn.

Several members of the Westminster Assembly were also renowned catechists. Besides William Gouge, there was Herbert Palmer, "famous as the best catechist in England," Anthony Tuckney, D.D., Prolocutor of the Assembly and successor to Palmer as chairman of the Committee on the Catechism, William Twisse, D.D., catechist of New College, Oxford, during the 1620's; Thomas Gataker, catechizer of youth, and Edmund Staunton, who publicly catechized the Corpus Christi College juniors during the Commonwealth days. At least seventeen commissioners wrote catechisms or were noted catechists.

Among the later Nonconformists, a few men stand out above their contemporaries: Joseph Alleine, who spent his short life in catechizing and urging others, notably the ministers of Somersetshire, to do likewise; John Owen; Richard Baxter, who has been quoted as saying toward the end of his life, that "he esteemed

catechizing to be so necessary and useful, that he could be content to spend the remaining part of his life in that work, tho he should do nothing else;"¹ Thomas Doolittle, author of several catechisms and master of one of the famous dissenting academies; and Owen Stockton, who, in the great tradition of Perkins and Baynes held catechetical lectures at Great St. Andrew's Church, Cambridge.

A vast majority of the Puritan catechists were lesser known men. A line or two, in Calamy, Clarke, or Brook, is all that remains to testify to the faithfulness of their catechizing. An indication of just how large this fraternity of catechizers was may be derived from the rolls of the Worcestershire Association.² At one time or another, between the years 1653-1662, seventy-two ministers subscribed to its "Agreement" for catechizing; and this was only one association, covering one county and a small part of two others. Of these seventy-two men, excluding its most famous member, Richard Baxter, only a handful wrote anything at all; only one, Josiah Rock, minister of Rowley, Staffordshire, was recognized beyond the circle of the Association for his catechizing skill; and not one ever published a catechism.

The clergy were not the only catechists; many of the laity were also actively engaged in this worthy work. Lady Margaret Hoby, in her celebrated Diary, records that it was one of her household duties to "hard Mr. Rhodes catechize."³ Samuel Clarke, in his

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1. Thomas Doolittle, A Plain Method of Catechizing, Preface.
 2. Geoffrey F. Nuttall, "The Worcestershire Association: its Membership," The Journal of Ecclesiastical History, Vol. One, pp. 197-206.
 3. Diary of Lady Margaret Hoby, 1599-1605, ed. Dorothy M Meads, p. 47.

biographies, states that many women, particularly his own wife Katherine and Mary Vere, regularly catechized the children, women and servants of their households. Noblemen, too, as the dedicatory pages to many of the catechisms indicate, were sympathetic toward the practice. Some, like Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston, high-sheriff of Ketton, Suffolk, even used their influence to encourage others to take up the work. Barnardiston was perhaps more successful than some: "He did prevail to the setting up of this practice which by his example succeeded well."

During the entire century, the practice of catechizing was a ubiquitous one. Every Puritan pastor, teacher and parent was a catechist, every child and servant a catechumen; the schoolroom and the livingroom, the sanctuary and the pastor's study, all served as class-rooms for Christian instruction.

Certain definite qualities seem to stand out in these catechists and ennoble their work. First, they had conviction. They believed in the importance of catechizing, and nothing could deter them from "instructing the ignorant in the matters of their salvation...by persuading them to learn catechisms."¹ Secondly, they had a natural gift of communication. Time and again, one reads that this man or that had a special dexterity in catechizing the youth, or the poor or the whole parish. As we have already seen, they were never content with another man's catechism; it always had to be adapted to the particular needs of their own congregations. They were never satisfied, either, until "the

1. Baxter, Works, XIV, p.96.

least part of the parish [who] are able to read it in writing,"¹ had a copy of a catechism, even when this meant underwriting the expense of publication and distribution. Thirdly, they were patient teachers. Baxter advised the Worcestershire Association and all other readers of his Reformed Pastor:² "Another necessary concomitant of our work is Patience. We must bear with many abuses and injuries from those that we are doing good for." Fourthly, they demonstrated a genuine love both for Christ, of whom they taught, and the catechumens, who they instructed. Thomas Wadsworth confessed to his congregation:³

My dear Parishioners!

God is my witness how the Salvation of your never-dying Souls is desired by me....And if the same love and tenderness had not continued in me, I would never have ventured upon this toylsome, laborious work of sending for you family by family, to instruct you in the knowledge of that Jesus Christ through whom only you expect to find salvation.

Alexander Gregory was another who put this love into practice: "He kept up a weekly lecture every Tuesday, and on Thursdays in the afternoon he catechized in his own house, taking great care not to discourage such as were bashful, or had bad memories, for whom he was so solicitously concerned, that he would often follow them to their own houses, (even the meanest in his parish) to give them private instruction in a plain and familiar way."⁴ Finally, they were men of knowledge. They spent a good part of every day with their books, for they agreed with Baxter, that "none is able to teach more than they know themselves."⁵

1. Works, XIV, 317.

2. Ibid., XIV, 130.

3. Remains: Being a Collection of some few Meditations with respect to the Lord's Supper. This particular letter is addressed to his congregation at Newington, Surrey, where he was rector from February 1652/3 to September 1660, C.R.

4. Palmer, Nonconformist Memorial, II, 232.

5. Works, XIX, 11.

Conducting of the Catechesis

Catechizing was practiced by two general groups, parents and heads or masters of households, and pastors and school-masters. The methods and techniques employed by both groups are similar but not identical.

One of the grave errors projected by some of the left wing sectaries was "that Parents are not to catechize their little children, nor to set them to read the Scripture, or to teach them to pray, but must let them alone for God to teach them."¹ Fortunately, this was not the accepted belief of the majority of Puritan parents; they catechized, and looked to their pastors for help in this work.

The catechesis procedures suggested by pastors was brief and easy. First, they strongly urged that at least one day a week, preferably Sunday, be set aside for catechizing. Secondly, they recommended that the household or family be divided into suitable groups for better results. Servants were to be catechized by the family chaplain, if there was one,² or by either the master or mistress. The instruction of children was usually the mother's responsibility. Bunyan indicates, in the second part of Pilgrim's Progress, that it was a matter to be taken seriously by all mothers. During Christiana and her children's visit to the three sisters, Prudence, Mercy and Charity, Prudence determined to "see how Christiana had brought

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1. Thomas Edwards, Gangraena: Or a Catalogue and Discovering of many of the Errors, Heresies, Blasphemies and pernicious Practices of the Sectaries of this time, vented and acted in England in these four last years (3rd edn.), Pt. I, 29.
 2. In MSS Baxter, V.50, there is a letter from Abraham Pinchbecke, at the time of writing, Chaplain to the Earl of Mulgrave, asking for details on how he might catechize the household.

up her children," and "so asked leave of her to catechise them."¹ To help mothers in the "Catechizing of children in the Knowledge of God, Themselves, and the Holy Scriptures," Baxter,² among others, wrote them a catechism. Finally, for help in the actual conducting of the catechesis, pastors made several specific recommendations: (1) propound the questions of the catechism and receive an answer, (2) then draw from the catechumen his understanding of the answer, and (3) conclude by reading, or causing to be read, the Scripture proofs, explanations, and applications, that may accompany the answer.

The generally accepted catechetical principles recommended by most pastors has been set down by the catechist, Thomas Lye:³ (1) start catechizing as soon as the child begins to use his reason, (2) teach through Bible stories and in a plain and simple manner, (3) acquaint children with the practice of religious duties, (4) use catechizing as a means of preparation for attendance upon the public ordinances, (5) when they are old enough, place a catechism into their hands for their own self improvement. A very important sixth principle, not mentioned by Lye, but urged by several others is: do not attempt to give them too much at any one time. John Preston expounds this principle quite graphically:⁴

Take a bottle, or any other vessel, with a narrow mouth, liquor must be poured into it softly and by degrees, or else more

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1. Works, III, 199.
 2. (The Mother's Catechism), Works, XVIII, lff.
 3. (Sermon II), A Supplement to the Morning-Exercise at Cripple-Gate, ed. Samuel Annesley, p 153ff.
 4. (Sermon delivered at Lincoln's Inn, 1626), ΚΑΙΝΑ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΛΑΙΑ, Things New and Old. Or, A Store-house of Similies, Sentences, Allegories, Apophthegms, Divine, Morall, Political, etc., With their severall applications. Collected and Observed from the Writings and Savings of the Learned in all Ages to the present, p.133.

will be spilt on the ground, then filled into the vessel; so it is with weaker Christians, such as have narrow-mouth'd capacities, shallow apprehensions, dull conceptions, the Word of God must be taught unto them by degrees, now a line, and then a line, now a precept, and anon a precept, they are not to be surcharged.

There was a great deal more variation in the variety and frequency of pastoral catechizing then there was in parental instruction. Three types are clearly distinguishable; lectures, family centered programs, and Sunday afternoon exercises.

The lecture type program was infinite in variety and frequency as these several examples demonstrate. Thomas Gouge and John Shaw spent part of every day in catechizing. The latter was motivated to take up this exacting work by a conversation held with one of his parish; Shaw asked him about Jesus Christ, and the man replied that he did not know who He was, having heard the name only once before, at a stage play.¹ Thomas Doolittle delivered his exposition of the Shorter Catechism every Wednesday to a crowded London audience. Thomas Gataker spent Friday evenings lecturing to his people. Philip Henry and George Trosse set aside part of their busy Saturdays for this work. Trosse let it be known that he would leave his books promptly at six o'clock in the evening to catechize any who made their way to his house. The Independent, Stephen Ford, regularly catechized at seven o'clock in the morning upon every Lord's Day. And Nicholas Thoroughgood, while serving as chaplain at sea, compelled all the sailors to spend part of Sunday afternoon in religious instruction. Many schools and academies also required regular catechetical exercises.

1. (Memoir of John Shaw), Yorkshire Diaries and Autobiographies in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, Surtee Society, LXV, 139.

Watson¹ writes that the school at Newport, Shropshire, in 1656, made it compulsory that the Master or Usher "shall spend one hour at the least every Saturday in the afternoon throughout the year in catechising of the Scholars, teaching them first the Assembly's lesser Catechism, and as any of the Scholars have been sufficiently acquainted and instructed in that, and shall grow to maturity and ripened in judgement, to instruct them in the said Assembly's larger Catechism." Any scholar who absented himself from these lectures was liable to expulsion.

The general purpose in catechetical lectures was to instruct the whole parish in the principles of religion. Philip Henry's² plan was an ambitious and often^{an} emulated one. He always took as his first catechumens the adults of his parish who "wanted instruction". After dismissing them, he took up the catechizing of all those under seventeen or eighteen years of age. When he was convinced of their religious knowledge, he turned to the children. His son, Matthew, closely followed his father's example in this practice, and though he used the Shorter Catechism with the older members of his congregation, he drew up a shorter and plainer one for the young children.³

Although these exercises bore resemblances to academic lectures, they were not strictly so formal, and tended to follow the

1. Foster Watson, The English Grammar School to 1660, p. 82.
2. Matthew Henry, An Account of the Life and Death of Mr. Philip Henry (3rd edn.) p.36.
3. Cf. W. Tong, An Account of the Life and Death of the late Reverend Mr. Matthew Henry, pp. 210-212.

general scheme laid down by the early catechist, Richard Bernard.

He writes in The Faithfull Shepheard:¹

The manner of Catechizing is to be performed by propounding questions and the people answering to them....Let the people then learn the Catechisme word for word, and answer to every question. Interrupt not beginners with interpretations, neither goe further with any then he can well say. After come to the meaning, and inquire an answer still of them, how they understand this or that in one question, and so in another; but goe not beyond their conceits; stay somewhat for an answer, but not too long; if one know not, aske another; if any but stammer at it, helpe him, and encourage him by commending his willingnesse; if none can answer a question, shew it thyself plainly, how they might have conceived it. And then aske it some one againe, and praise him that understands it, and answers after thy telling of him.

The most popular form of catechizing was by far that of family instruction. This was the method employed by Baxter at Kidderminster and imitated by countless others. Thomas Wadsworth of Newington, near London, after reading the Reformed Pastor, adopted Baxter's scheme, and conducted a correspondence with the Kidderminster pastor in order to perfect his practice.² Joseph Alleine, as his biographers make plain, successfully followed Baxter's example in Taunton, Somersetshire.³ Daniel Burgess, another of the many disciples of Baxter, unable to discuss his catechizing problems in person writes that he often finds himself turning "to ye Book", meaning undoubtedly, the Reformed Pastor.⁴ For in this book,

1. Bernard, p.9.

2. MSS Baxter, II, 245, 249; IV, 166.

3. Richard Baxter and Theodosia Alleine, An Account of the Life and Death of that Excellent Minister of Christ the Rev. Joseph Alleine, A.B. (1815 edn.)

4. MSS Baxter, II, 289. I am not certain whether this is the father or son. The elder Burgess ministered in Wiltshire and the younger in London.

written for his Worcestershire brethren who signed the "Agreement" for catechizing, Baxter sets forth, among other things, his method of catechizing.

Only the broad outline of his scheme can be sketched here. It has two parts; first, the raising of interest, secondly, the catechesis. There are five important steps in the securing of interest and commencement of catechizing. These are taken from the Reformed Pastor, a letter to Thomas Wadsworth, and the Reliquiae. (1) "I first briefly explained to y^m y^e reasons of o^r understanding in y^e open congregation, & reade y^m over y^e Agreement, Exhortation & Catechisme."¹ (2) "And yⁿ I Preached 2 or 3 dayes (from Heb. 5:11,12) to them y^e necessity of it, even to y^e age & ancient p^rfesso^rs who have beene loyters & remaine Ignorant of y^e Principles."² (3) "When this is done, it will be necessary according to our Agreement, that we give one of the Catechisms to every Family in the Parish, poor and rich, that they might be so far without excuse; for if you leave it to themselves, perhaps half of them will not get them."³ He tells Wadsworth that he assigned this task to his assistant, who went "from house to house through towne & Parish (neere 20 miles som parts) & deliver to every family one; about 5 or 6 refused y^m & above 800 accepted them."⁴ (4) "Then (after 6 weekes time given y^m to learne y^m) I cause one of y^e clerks to goe every weeke, weekly before their

1. MSS Baxter, II, 249. Letter to Thomas Wadsworth.

2. Loc. cit.

3. Works, XIV, 316.

4. MSS Baxter, II, 249.

time comes & give notice to y^e families y^t are to come in."¹

Baxter urges that they be taken together in common so that "they will the more willingly come, and the backward will be the more ashamed to keep off."² (5) The handling of this great number of people was accomplished in this way: "Two Dayes every Week my Assistant and myself took 14 Families between us for private Catechising and Conference (he going through the Parish, and the Town coming to me)....So that all the afternoon on Mondays and Tuesdays I spent in this (after I had begun it; for it was many years before I did attempt it). And my Assistant spent the morning of the same Days in the same Employment."³

It is at this point that one notices certain procedural differences between the method of Baxter and that of his imitators. Joseph Alleine, who like Baxter found it difficult to start family catechizing, used "to draw a catalogue of the names of the families in each street, and so to spend a day or two before he intended to visit them, that they might not be absent, and that he might understand who was willing to receive him."⁴ Peter Du Moulin, Oxford teacher, was not so blessed as Baxter to minister to "a congregation of sedentary tradesmen you are sure to find at home upon any of the weeke dayes," and so made a habit of visiting the families of his country parish on Sunday evenings "after the second Sermon".⁵

1. Loc. cit.

2. Works, XIV, 317.

3. R.B., I, 83.

4. An Account of the Life and Death..., p. 131.

5. MSS Baxter, II, 293. June 9, 1658. Letter from Du Moulin to Baxter.

The essence of Baxter's catechizing is simple and direct although he devotes over twenty pages to it.¹ His main concern was for the instruction of individuals, within the family unit, in the principles of religion. He chose to deal privately with each member of the family, because he realized that "some cannot speak freely before others, and some cannot endure to be questioned before others, because they think it tendeth to their shame to have others hear their answers."² His purpose was to elicit their knowledge of the catechism, in which he wisely refrained from "asking them wise, needless, or doubtful and very difficult questions,"³ and "to instruct them according to their several capacities."⁴ During the hour spent together with each family Baxter revealed a deep concern and love for each member and a keen interest in their spiritual estate. When the catechizing session was over, Baxter checked-off the name of each person who recited the catechism, and at the same time he admitted them to the Lord's Supper. Any who were especially poor were rewarded financially for their efforts. This last was a typically Puritan gesture.

Sunday afternoon catechetical exercises were especially popular after the publication of the Shorter Catechism, although they had been urged as early as the Synod of Dort.⁵ Palmer, in his biography of George Hughes, gives a concise word picture of what went on during these afternoon sessions: "In the afternoon, after a short prayer,

1. Cf. R.B.i 83, for his own summary of this practice.

2. Works, XIV, 320.

3. Loc. Cit.

4. Loc. cit.

5. Cf. J.J. Van Oosterzee, Practical Theology, p. 462.

he expounded a whole chapter, baptized the children; and after singing and a prayer in the pulpit, catechized, preached, and concluded with a prayer, a psalm, and the blessing."¹ The actual procedures of these meetings varied, but they always had two essential components: the setting forth of the catechism, and the preaching of a sermon, including an explanation and application of the catechism's answer. A good example of how one man conducted the Sunday afternoon catechetical lecture is to be found in Thomas Watson's A Body of Practical Divinity. It contains one hundred and seventy-six sermons on the Shorter Catechism and is laid out in the format suggested above.

One other important phase of the Puritan catechesis ministry was their constant efforts to enlist others in the work. They were especially interested in the establishing of ministerial associations for the furtherance of the work. Baxter organized the ministers of Worcestershire and wrote the Reformed Pastor for their benefit. Shortly after its publication, Stephen Street wrote to Baxter that he was distributing it among the ministers of Sussex, and handing out "ye litle boks of Agreement" to the families of his parish, in an endeavour to promote the work in his county.² Joseph Alleine and Joseph Bernard sent out a letter "to the Ministers of Somersetshire and Wiltshire" in an attempt to organize them for catechizing.³ Philip Henry was one of the leaders in associating the ministers of

1. Nonconformist Memorial, II, 56.

2. MSS Baxter, V, 105.

3. An Account of the Life and Death..., Letter XLIV, pp. 378-380.

Shropshire and North Wales for this work.¹ Nightingale writes that at least one other successful attempt was made along these lines, for the ministers of Cumberland and Westmoreland united under an agreement for catechizing.² Baxter, in his correspondence, was always urging the formation of ministerial associations, but always adding that unless catechizing was included as one of the terms of agreement, there was no possibility that the association would really succeed.

Summary.

The Puritans continued, and at the same time gave new impetus to the revived art of catechizing. It became the vehicle by which they instructed the individual conscience in the moral law and the whole man in the principles of religion. Their catechesis was sound and incorporated the best of Christian and secular pedagogy. Their catechetical writings were simple, clear and direct, and intelligible to the youngest children. They were faithful and indefatigable in their labours, and legion in their publications. The greatest testimony to the effectiveness and permanence of their work is the strong vestiges of Puritanism still traceable in the individual and corporate British conscience.

1. Ibid., p. 46.

2. B. Nightingale, The Ejected of 1662 in Cumberland and Westmorland, II, 91.

CHAPTER IV

CASES OF CONSCIENCE

Introduction

Puritan manuals on cases of conscience were to the adult what catechizing was to the children and youth, namely - the chief means by which the conscience was educated. As in every age, but especially in the rigorist Puritan age, souls were continually beset by problems of conscience, or, strictly speaking, cases of conscience: "a practicall question, concerning which, the Conscience may make a doubt."¹ Consequently, seventeenth century pastors were urged, not only to "move the bread of life, and tosse it up and down in generalities, but also break it into particular directions; drawing it down to cases of Conscience, that a man may be warrented in his particular actions, whether they be lawfull or not."² On this point, at least, Anglicans and Puritans were agreed.³ Now, one of the long established means for the implementing of this work was the publication of manuals on cases of conscience. Yet, as late as 1659, it was lamented, that "our English Divines, who of all others are judged the fittest, and ablest to write Cases of Conscience, in regard of their manifold experience in this kind, have yet done so little."⁴ The reason was simple enough. "This part of Prophecie," wrote Ames,⁵ "hath hitherto beene lesse practiced in the Schooles of the Prophets, because our Captaines were necessarily inforced to

1. Ames, Conscience with the Power and Cases Thereof, Bk. II, 1.

2. Thomas Fuller, The Holy State, Bk. II, 76.

3. Cf. Thomas Wood, English Casuistical Divinity During the Seventeenth Century, Chap. 1.

4. Samuel Clarke, Medulla Theologiae: or the Marrow of Divinity, To the Christian Reader.

5. Ames, op. cit., To the Reader.

fight alwaies in the front against the enemies to defend the Faith, and to purge the floore of the Church; so that they could not plant and water the Fields and Vineyards as they desired; as it useth to fall out in time of hotte warres." The void was temporarily filled by going "downe to the Philistims (that is, our Students to Popish Authors) to sharpen every man his Share, his Mattocke, or his Axe, or his weeding Hooke...."¹ It was a regrettable practice, though, as Thomas Pickering² pointed out: "wee have just cause to challenge the Popish Church; who in their Case-writings have erred, both in the substance and circumstances of this Doctrine." In all fairness to the Medieval casuists it should be pointed out, as Wood so ably does,³ that the Puritan rejection of Roman books was not in every case an honest one. It was Jesuit casuistical divinity in particular that they disliked, and not all medieval teaching. Ames⁴, for one, found William of Paris and others most commendable. But out of ignorance or prejudice they often recoiled from anything "Popish" when they thought it bore the distinctive mark of "Jesuitry",

Puritan Manuals of Cases of Conscience.

William Perkins was the first to provide Englishmen with a complete treatise on conscience. His work, The Whole Treatise of the Cases of Conscience, was published posthumously in 1606, and it has been called "well nigh a Christian Ethick".⁵ His admirably

1. Ames, op. cit., To the Reader.

2. Perkins, (The Whole Treatise of the Cases of Conscience), Works, II, The Epistle Dedicatorie.

3. Wood, op. cit., pp. 57-66.

4. Ames, op. cit., Bk. II, 49-54, contains "Certaine collections out of the Booke of William Paris concerning temptations...."

5. William Whewell includes this quotation from the German theologian Staudin in his History of Moral Philosophy, p. 3.

lucid division of cases was followed by most later Puritan moralists: "some concerning man simply considered by himselfe; some againe, as he stands in relation to another."¹ The latter are divided into those cases concerning man in relation to God and man in relation to other men. William Ames, in his De Conscientia ejus Jure et Casibus, followed his tutor's example; but his work did not appear in English until after his death in 1639. The ingenious Dr. Barrow, Bishop of Lincoln, in his Directions for the Choice of Books in the Study of Divinity,² heartedly commends Ames: "Amesius de Conscientia, etc. A Non-conformist, and therefore caute legendus, as to that particular; but otherwise he writes very rationally, and what he resolves is short, and the Texts he urges very pertinent: So that when he is out, (which is not usual) you lose not much; and when he is right, you have it in a little time." Bolton, Immanuel Bourne, Downname and William Gouge wrote valuable treatises at this time, too; but their works are not strictly manuals on cases of conscience.

It was not until mid-century that the supply of manuals began to meet the demand. These works proved particularly popular: William Fenner, The Soules Looking Glass (1651); Stephen Gere, The Golden Meane, being some Considerations, together with some Cases of Conscience, resolved, for the more frequent Administration of the Lord's Supper (1656); John Ball, The Power of Godlines (1657); Samuel Clarke, Medulla Theologiae: or the Marrow of Divinity,

1. Works, II, 12.

2. p. 42.

contained in sundry questions and cases of conscience, both speculative, and practical; the greatest part of them collected out of the works of our most judicious, experienced, and orthodox English divines, the rest are supplied by the author (1659); Thomas Gouge, Christian Directions Shewing how to Walk with God all the Day Long (1660); Joseph Church (d.1671), The Christian's Daily Monitor to personal and relative Duties, with a resolution of some Cases of Conscience; for the Benefit of young Persons;¹ Joseph Alleine, Divers Cases satisfactorily resolved (1672); Richard Baxter, A Christian Directory or A Summ of Practical Theology and Cases of Conscience (1673);² John Norman, Cases of Conscience (1673); William Thomas, Scriptures Opened, and Sundry Cases of Conscience resolved (1675); Henry Wilkinson, Counsels and Comforts for Troubled Consciences (1679); and The Morning Exercises at St. Giles Cripple-gate, with suppliments, edited by Thomas Case. The excellency of these works is somewhat questioned in the greatest of them all, Richard Baxter's A Christian Directory.³ In answering the question: "What books, especially of theology, should one choose, who for want of money or time, can read but few?", he feels disposed, in his section on "Cases of Conscience", to recommend of Puritans, only Perkins and Ames. Wakefield⁴ is apparently justified, then, in selecting for his study of Puritan casuistry, the cases of Perkins, Ames, and Baxter. Although this chapter is not so circumscribed; it, too, will concentrate on the cases of these three.

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1. This work is listed by Palmer, Nonconformist Memorial, I, 137, but it does not appear in the S.T.C.
 2. The edition used in this chapter is that of Baxter's nineteenth century editor, William Orme.
 3. Works, V, 592, 599.
 4. Puritan Devotion, pp. 113-129.

Characteristics of the Puritan Manuals

There are three significant differences between the Puritan and earlier Roman manuals on cases of conscience. The Puritan moralists had no inherent authority, such as was claimed by their Roman counterparts, and were therefore obliged to give proofs as well as results. Consequently, their works abound with Scripture proofs and references to other casuists. Whewell,¹ in writing of this tradition, states:

The teacher's business now became, not to prescribe the outward conduct, but to direct the inward thought; not to decide cases, but to instruct the conscience. In the title of his works, (Cases of Conscience) the attention had hitherto been bestowed mainly on the former word; it was now transferred to the latter. The determination of Cases was replaced by the discipline of the Conscience. Casuistry was no longer needed, except as far as it became identical with Morality.

Secondly, the Puritans recognized that Christian moral principles were intended to operate in every circumstance of human life, both private and public. Therefore, their manuals were not simply treatises on the general Christian ethic, but examinations of the various and sundry problems confronting human life at every stage and every turn. Finally, Puritan moralists had in mind a much wider body of readers than had been presupposed by the casuists whom they sought to displace. Puritan manuals were written for all devout Christian men, clergy and laity. William Perkins first delivered his in public lectures.² Ames believed that the subject of his

1. Whewell, op. cit., p.3.

2. The title page reads: "Taught and Delivered by M. W. Perkins in his Holiday-Lectures".

work was one to which all men should give their close attention.¹ Baxter² wrote his work for "three sorts": "the younger and more unfurnished, and unexperienced sort of Ministers"; "the more Judicious Masters of Families"; and "private Christians". The sermons appearing in The Morning Exercises were preached in and about London.

Problems of Conscience

These manuals are invaluable as a primary source for the cataloging of the myriad problems of conscience. A thorough study of the subject would involve several other sources, too. The most valuable being - both for their highly personal and introspective character - Puritan diaries. The seventeenth century is the "Age of Diaries", and the Puritans were the foremost diarists. They committed to those now yellowing pages, their hopes and fears, their virtues and vices, and their testimonies of faith along with their confessions of doubt. The turning of each new leaf brings one face to face with the Puritan conscience and its problems. The printed sermons of the legions of Nonconformity are also a veritable mine. The preachers' constant and recurring attacks upon certain evils suggests that these were the real stumbling blocks of that age. Private correspondence, treatises and devotional literature, of which there is much³, also abound with problems.

1. Ames, op. cit., To the Reader.

2. Works, II, viiif.

3. Douglas Bush, English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century, p. 294, states that more than two-fifths of the books published in England from 1480-1640 were religious, and for the years 1600-40 the percentage is still higher.

Problems of conscience have traditionally been divided into three types: error, doubt and perplexity.¹ A problem of error is one which arises when there is a final conflict between the conscience of the individual and the will of his church. In such a conflict, it is assumed that either the individual or the church is "in error". In the rigorist Puritan Age such an assumption was unthinkable; neither the local congregation, nor the classis, could be "in error". The limits of tolerated, conscientious divergence were narrowly defined. So that what for other communions and traditions are, oft times, problems of doubt, were for the Puritans, problems of error. This is substantiated by the many church records of the periods. The disciplinary cases of the Independent Church at Rothwell, Northamptonshire, from 1690 to 1715,² are a good example. These people were "in error":

Richard Hill, for unfaithfulness in his master's service.
 Bro. Campion, for proffering love to one sister whilst engaged to another.
 Bro. Palmer, for admitting card-playing into his house, and playing himself.
 Sister Bundy, for railing, anger, clamour, wrath, and evil-speaking.
 Bridget Rowlatt, for sloth in business.
 Simon Crozier, of Kettring, for withdrawing from the private meeting.
 Sarah Kirk, for idleness and rebellion against her parents.
 Bro. Cussens, for being overtaken in beer.
 John Quincey, for idleness.
 Sister Hemington, for taking a journey on a Lord's Day.
 Susan Ponder, for conforming herself to the fashions of the wicked world.
 Sister Hollick, for her pride.
 Bro. Clark, for riding over unmown grass.

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1. The discussion of this subject is largely that of Kenneth E. Kirk in Conscience and Its Problems, pp. 215-377.
 2. Norman Glass, The Early History of the Independent Church at Rothwell, Northamptonshire, p. 13.

Mrs. Wood, for borrowing a pillion¹ and not returning it.
 Bro. Hoby, for jumping for wagers.
 Sarah and Isabel Whitwell, for holding communion with their brother, an excommunicated person.
 John Cussens, for threatening to knock his brother's brains out.
 Bro. Musket, for playing at nine-pins.

Problems of doubt arise when a moral law or principle is alleged to exist; it is certain that at one time it was in force, or still recognized and obeyed by some. But many doubt whether it still has a claim on them. The Puritans were beset by doubtful cases both without and within their communion. On the one hand, there were cases in which some striking and obvious difference of principle was to be observed between their usage and Anglican usage; and where two branches of organized Christendom disagree, there must be cause for doubt. On the other hand, at various times, groups of Christians within Puritanism would put forward demands that the church should officially condemn some proposition or type of conduct of which they disapproved. These moral demands, strongly urged by a not inconsiderable body or group, tended also to raise questions of doubt. We saw in an earlier chapter that pastors urged souls to resolve their doubts along the lines of rigorist or probabiliorists principles. That is, when in doubt, the Puritan was urged to follow the "safer" course, unless the greater weight of probability was against the law, in which case he was free to follow the opinions in favour of liberty.

The Puritans are seldom, if ever, faced by problems of perplexity. They are really problems of divided loyalties, arising,

1. A woman's saddle.

states Kirk,¹ over the choice between allowing an evil to take place on the one hand and performing a sin on the other. The Puritans do not recognize such a distinction. The prevention of evil is, for them, as important and imperative as the neglecting of sin.

Treatment of Cases of Conscience

In general we shall follow Perkin's twofold division: "some concerning man simply considered by himself: some againe, as he stands in relation to another." His second division shall be further sub-divided according to the scheme used by Baxter in his definitive work, A Christian Directory: Christian Ethics, (or Private Duties), Christian Economics, (or Family Duties), Christian Ecclesiastics, (or Church Duties), and Christian Politics, (or Duties to our Rules and Neighbours). There is only one case to be treated under Perkins's first divisions, because ultimately there was only one case: A Case of Conscience, The Greatest that ever was: how a man may know whether he be the child of God, or no.²

The Greatest Case that ever was

The gravest question of all facing our moralists is the one which William Perkins asks in his short treatise. It was prompted by the strong desire for assurance, that "reflect act of the soul, by which a Christian clearly sees that he is for the present in the state of grace, and so an heire apparent to glory."³ It

1. Cf. Kirk, op. cit., p. 320ff.

2. Perkins, Works, I, 423-428. It is I John arranged in a dialogue between John and the Church.

3. Clarke, op. cit., p. 117.

out weighed all other cases in importance; although it was relegated to the treatment of eccentric scruples in most Roman manuals.¹ The Puritan doctrine of assurance evolved out of the continued handling of this question, and is incorporated in their Confession² and claimed by Wesley as the same doctrine as his own.³

The Puritans, in answering this question, began with God Himself and His election. This election, writes Perkins,⁴ is bound up with vocation, faith, adoption, justification, sanctification, and eternal glorification, and "he that can be assured of one of them, may infallibly conclude in his owne heart, that he hath, and shall have interest in all the other in his due time;" for is not this the testimony of St. Paul.⁵ Now, we can be assured of faith, continues Perkins, that faith "whereby man is ingrafted into Christ, and thereby becomes one with Christ, and Christ one with him, Ephes. 3:17" Therefore, the child of God can conclude, that through faith he "hath assured hold of his election, and effectual vocation, and consequently of his glorification in the kingdom of heaven."

Everyone did not find the acquisition of faith as simple a task as Perkins makes out. For their benefit, Ames, in his chapter "of Faith"⁶, offered some practical suggestions. First, desire faith; consider "that this is the Commandment of God, that he doe believe in Christ, I John 3:23;" and "meditate of the happiness of those which do truly believe, I John 3:16." Secondly, work for faith;

1. Wakefield, op. cit., p. 126.

2. Confession of Faith, etc., Chap. XVIII, pp. 94-100.

3. Wakefield, op. cit., p. 126.

4. Works, II, 18-22.

5. Romans 8:30.

6. Ames, op. cit., Bk. II, 12-16.

renounce self-righteousness, put on the righteousness of Christ, and fasten upon the promises of the Gospel. Thirdly, continually test your faith by the appropriate signs. Does it give comfort? Does it overcome all difficulties? Is it sincere; does it desire union with Christ, does it embrace the whole Word of God, does it purify the heart from sin, does it work in the heart a sincere love for God and one's fellow man?

There is a logical syllogism in all this, as Baxter¹ points out: "Our assurance is an act of knowledge, participating of faith and internal sense or knowledge reflect. For divine faith saith, 'He that believeth is justified, and shall be saved.' Internal sense and knowledge of ourselves saith, 'But I believe'. Reason, or discursive knowledge saith, 'Therefore I am justified and shall be saved'."

There are also practical means for acquiring such assurance as faith guarantees. Richard Rogers² lists six steps: (1) A man must hate and be troubled by his miserable state; (2) consult with others what to do; (3) become broken hearted and humble; (4) have a secret desire for forgiveness and so make confession of his sins; (5) forsake all for faith, and highly prize it; (6) apply Christ and his promise.

There is another side to the discussion, introduced by Baxter.³ He cautions those who zealously seek after assurance to bear in mind that few ever really attain it: "it is only the stronger Christians that attain assurance ordinarily; even those who have a great

1. Works, IX, 113

2. Seven Treatises (1630 edn.), p. 16ff. Cf., also, Edward Reyner, Precepts for Christian Practice: or the New Creature (1688 edn.), pp. 204-207, for a similar list.

3. Works, IX, 94.

degree of faith and love, and keep them much in exercise, and are very watchful and careful in obedience: and consequently (most Christians being of the weaker sort) it is but few that do attain to assurance of their justification and salvation." But this is not to be lamented. In one sense it is good, for the doubting of assurance is a spur to the better living of the Christian life. While on the other hand, the quest for assurance may lead to the disruption of life, causing us to have needless scruples and to cherish unnecessary doubts.¹

The lack of complete and perfect assurance should not suggest a lack of consolation, however. Baxter counsels: "Trouble of mind may be overcome; conscience may be quieted; true peace obtained; yea, a man may have that joy in the Holy Ghost, wherein the kingdom of God is said to consist, without certainty of salvation."² Ames³ adds, that the whole testimony of Scripture declares the possibility of attaining Christian consolation. It is really this for which a Christian should seek, and for which the pastor labours. Assurance, though obtainable, is not really commendable; but consolation is both available and desirable.

Christian Ethics

Anger

All Puritans were agreed that anger was both a virtue and a vice.

1. Cf. Baxter, Works, IX, 189.

2. Ibid., IX, 101.

3. Cf. Ames, op. cit., Bk. II. 36f.

To be just or holy, it needs, according to Perkins,¹ three things. It must have "a right beginning or motive," such as Moses had when he was angered at the Israelites for worshipping the golden calf. It needs a right object, that is, "we must put a difference between the person, and the offence or sinne of that person." The sin of the person or the offence, and not the person himself, is the right object of anger. Finally, there is a right way of being angry. Clarke² suggests that this involves mixing love for the object of our anger with sorrow for the offence, in a modest way, not prolonging our anger unduly; and seeking always the glory of God, the good of Church and State, and the best interest of the party against whom angered.

Unjust anger is the reverse of just. It is not moved by faith or motivated by love, it does not observe any limitations, and is not directed to a right end. Its most single characteristic is its selfish nature.³

Perkins's remedy for unjust anger is both meditative and practical.⁴ Christians are to meditate upon these things: (1) "That God by expresse commandement forbids rash and unjust anger, and commands the contrarie, namely, the duties of love." (2) "That all injuries which befall us due come by Gods providence, whereby they are turned to a good end, namely our good." (3) "God

1. Works, II, 121-124.

2. Cf. Clarke, op. cit., p. 70.

3. John Ball, The Power of Godlines, Bk. 3, 241. Cf., also, Baxter, Works, III, 291.

4. Cf., also, Baxter, op. cit., III, 291-299 for a similar remedy.

is long-suffering even toward wicked men; and wee in this point must be followers of him." (4) "Meditation is, concerning the goodness of God toward us." (5) "All revenge is Gods right, and hee hath not given it unto man." (6) "Meditation is, touching Christs death. He suffered for us the first death, and the sorrows of the second death: much more then ought wee at his commandement, to put up small wrongs and injuries without revenge." He further urges that we consider that the neighbour with whom we are angry is our brother, and therefore we ought to forgive him as we ourselves hope to be forgiven. We are also to think of ourselves and consider that rash anger "greatly annoyes the health."

He proposes five practical remedies. Conceal your anger. Depart from them with whom angered. Refrain from getting excited. If you feel the passion of anger, turn it against yourself for sinning daily against God. "Accustome our selves to the daily exercises of invocation of the name of God, for this end, that hee in mercie would mortifie all our earthy affections, especially this corrupt and violent affection of unjust wrath."

Bolton's¹ counsel is not dissimilar. He recommends a listening "to the counsell which the very morall Sages minister against this spirituall maladie, and to the rules and remedies which the light of reason leades us unto." He urges us to put ourselves in the place of those with whom we are angry; pass by petty provocations; ignore the tongues of slanderers and tale-bearers; and suppress our curiosity about what others think of us. He deplures the habit of those who "listen to heare what their servants talke

1. (Some General Directions for a Comfortable Walking with God), The Workes of the Reverend, truly Pious, and judiciously Learned Robert Bolton, II, 95-104.

concerning them" or those who, "if a letter fall into their hands wherein they think themselves to bee mentioned..., make no bones... to break it open." He warns against covetousness, "the Cut-throat of Grace", and conceit, which imagines that every whispering voice is aimed at them. To these are added religious directions. Remember that all wrongs are fore-appointed by God and so with the Psalmist say: "I was dumbe, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it."¹ And let the wonderful patience of the mighty Lord of heaven and earth be an example of how to be patient and merciful with other men's weaknesses.

Ball² goes one step further, suggesting some directions for the cure of anger in others. The best way is to show them that we are truly repentant for causing them to be angry, for anger ceases in others when confronted by humility and kindness. Among others, silence or a soft and mild answer might prove more effective. With some, "grave and wholesome admonitions, with good counsell and advice seasonably administered, is a notable remedy of unjust anger". Finally, everyone ought to "marke the disposition of angry persons" and avoid being offensive toward them.

Apparel

The legend about Puritan dress communicated by Lord Macaulay,³

1. Psalm 39:9.

2. Ball, op.cit., Bk. 3, 263-266.

3. History of England (1913 edn.), ed. Charles Harding Firth, I, 70:
 "It was a sin...to wear lovelocks, to put starch into a ruff...
 The extreme Puritan was at once known from other men by his gait,
 his garb, his lank hair...."

Hill,¹ and many others, has apparently little substance in fact. Shakespeare's² Malvolio, "a kind of Puritan," was distinguished by his yellow stockings wore cross-gartered. Portraits of the Puritan gentry seem to show them attired just as are the Cavalier gentry. Anthony Wood,³ peering from his garret window, was accustomed during Commonwealth days to seeing Oxford students go by "veerie lavishly in their apparell," having powdered hair, and wearing hat ribbons, laced bands and long cuffs. They were probably following the example of their Vice-Chancellor John Owen, who went about "like a young Scholar, with powdred hair, snake-bone bandstrings (or bandstrings with very large tassels) lawn band, a large set of Ribbons pointed, at his knees, and Spanish Leather Boots, with large lawn Tops, and his Hat mostly cocked."⁴ All of this is not meant to suggest that the Puritans were not concerned about apparel, just the opposite was the case, as we shall see in a moment, but it ought to indicate that here, as elsewhere, there was a degree of sanity about their judgement for which they are seldom given credit. In the wearing of apparel

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1. Georgianna Hill, History of English Dress, I, 279f: "Never before in England did we have two distinct types of costume existing side by side as we had in the seventeenth century. For the difference between Royalist and Puritan was not a difference between rich and poor or between noble and simple...The Puritans did not wear their sombre dress because it was imposed on them, or because their rank and position made luxury unseemly. They wore it from choice. To the strict and thorough going Puritan all luxury was abhorrent."
 2. Twelfth Night.
 3. Life and Times, December, 1659 quoted by Scholes, op.cit., p.105.
 4. Anthony Wood, Athenae Oxoniensis, ii, 738.

our moralists allowed a degree of laxity as long as this was not abused.

Perkins¹ begins his discussion of the subject with suggestions for the making and wearing of clothing. There are two Scripture rules to be followed in the preparation of apparel. "Our care for apparell, and the ornaments of our bodies, must be very moderate."² This rule was specifically directed against those who "follow the fashion, and take up every new fangled attire, whensoever it comes abroad." The second rule is: "All apparell must be fitted to the body, in a comely and decent manner, such as becometh holinesse."³ The abuse of this rule leads to such sinful practices as women laying "open their naked breasts to public view, as ensignes of their owne vanity, and alluring baites to draw others unto folly."⁴

There are also two rules to be observed in the wearing of clothing. One "that wee weare and put on our apparell, for those proper ends, for which God hath ordained the same." These ends are: "for the defending of the body from the extremitie of parching heat, and pinching cold" and "the preserving of life and health." The second rule, a mixture of the spiritual and practical, is typical of the Puritans: "Wee must make a spirituall use of the apparell which we weare." The daily ritual of dressing becomes for Perkins a spiritual exercise. Our clothing serves to remind us of original sin, for God clothed Adam's nakedness. The putting on of our gar-

1. Works, II, 134-140.

2. Matthew 6:28-31.

3. Titus 2:3.

4. John Downname, Guide to Godlynesse, Bk. 3, 354f.

ments ought to admonish us to put on Christ and to gird up our loins. The removal of our clothes should remind us to put off the old man, that is, "the masse and body of sinfull corruption."

Downname's¹ practical directions are very similar. The material must not be excessive in cost. Each sex should refrain from wearing the apparel of the other. Avoid wearing strange attire. Resist attempts to rapidly change the fashions, which is "a notable signe, not onely of pride and vaine glory; but also of vanity and extreme folly."

The wearing of ornaments, such as gold, silver, precious stones, silks, lace, and velvets, are allowed by our moralists so long as they are "used sparingly and with moderation."² They are not allowed if their purpose is to direct attention to the outward body or used as a sign of wantonness and pride.³

"Women painting their faces" is another matter. It is condemned by all Puritans. Clarke⁴ finds the practice "not only evil in regard of the abuse, but utterly unlawful and abominable in its own nature." It is an evil practice because: (1) it adulterates God's work; (2) it causes men to admire "a painted statue instead of God's work;" (3) it reveals an inner shame covered over by a false colour; (4) it falsely identifies a woman as one "following the practice of Harlots;" and (5) it disgraces religion.

The hair comes in for discussion, too. Contrary to popular

1. Loc. cit.

2. Clarke, op. cit., p. 110

3. Perkins, op. cit.,

4. Clarke, op. cit., pp. 114-116.

belief, all the Puritans did not favour the practice of wearing the locks long. One of the Cripple-gate lecturers observes that "for Men to nurish the Hair at the full length, is a Contravention to the discriminating badge and cognizance which the God of Nature has bestowed upon them."¹ He also says something about the practice of wearing wigs. "The hoary head is a crown of glory and the beauty of old men is the gray head."² And are we asham'd of our Glory? Do we despise our Crown? Will nothing serve but juvenile hairs on an aged head?"

The Government of the Tongue: Truth and Falsehood

In his The Life and Death of Mr. Badman, Bunyan³ lists lying as the first and foremost sin of Badman's youth: "When he was but a child, he was so addicted to lying that his parents scarce knew when to believe he spake true." No evil was more hated by the Puritans than lying; they agreed with Ames,⁴ that "it is a sinne abominable to God." They recognized a difference, though, between lies and falsehoods. "Lying," writes Perkins,⁵ "is when a man speaketh otherwise then the truth is, with a purpose to deceive." A falsehood is merely a false opinion, writes Ames,⁶ either in the mind and "signified to no man," or spoken. Falsehoods become lies only when they are voluntarily and designedly uttered.⁷

1. (The Sinfulness of Strange Apparel), A Continuation of Morning-Exercise Questions and Cases of Conscience, pp. 589-633.
2. Proverbs 16:31; 20:20.
3. Works, III, 597.
4. Ames, op. cit., Bk. V, 269.
5. (The Government of the Tongue), Works, I, 442f.
6. Cf. Ames, op. cit. Bk. V, 268f.
7. Baxter, Works, III, 508ff.

Lying was held an abomination for many reasons: (1) "He which lyeth, in so doing conformeth himselfe to the divell."¹ (2) "It doth disorder the lyer in himselfe," because it sets the speech against the mind."² (3) "It is a disorder also against [one's] neighbour."³ (4) "It doth in a speciall manner hurt the Majesty of God, who is the author, and such a lover of truth, that hee cannot lye; and also hath imprinted in man the image of his truth to be kept; neither did hee ever give authority of lying by any dispensation."⁴ (5) "There is somewhat that is base, and low in a lye."⁵

Although the Puritan casuists hated lying, they did not completely prohibit it. Perhaps they were handicapped by the fact that in the Scriptures God Himself occasionally demands acts of deceiving which come perilously close to the sanctioning of a lie. They readily acknowledged this fact. Perkins⁶ mentions the cases of Rahab, who hid the spies, and the Egyptian midwives, who refused to deliver the children of the Israelites to the Pharoah. But he is quick to point out that they were commended "for their faith, not for their lying." The works "which they did were excellent works of mercy, and therefore to be allowed; and the doers failed onely in the manner of performing them." He makes a distinction in their dissembling between intention, which is all-important, and the outward deed, which is not.

1. Perkins, op. cit., Cf., also, Reyner, op. cit., p. 16.

2. Ames, op. cit., Bk. V, 270.

3. Loc. cit.

4. Ames, op. cit., p. 270.

5. Loc. cit.

6. Perkins, op. cit.

Another, and more important reason, for their failure to issue an injunction against lying altogether, was that some deemed it, on occasions, as necessary. There was far from complete agreement, though, on the degree of permissible lying to be allowed. Perkins,¹ emphatically and categorically, answers "NO" to the question: "Whether may not a man lie, if it be for the procuring of some great good to our neighbour, or to the whole country where we are?" This is a position almost identical with Kant who, it will be remembered, said that he would be obliged to honestly answer a murderer's question as to whether his intended victim is at home.²

Ames³ does not go to the absurd lengths of his tutor or Kant. He recognizes that sometimes "it is lawfull to conceale the truth by silence," even as Christ did before Pilate. It is even lawful, on occasions, "to speake those words, out of which wee know probably, that the hearers may conclude somewhat that is false." But he repudiates all "concealing of the truth by mentall reservation, or verbal equivocation," and enjoys exposing those Roman casuists who practice this art.

John Dod⁴ laments the practice of those, "that if they know any private fault, in any man, then without anie regard of time and place, they proclaime their neighbours infirmities to the wide World, and care not before what companie, amongst what persons they blaze out his weaknesse." He mocks their defense ("I

1. Loc. cit.

2. (On a Supposed Right to Lie), Critique of Practical Reason and Other Writings in Moral Philosophy, p. 348.

3. Ames, op. cit. Bk. V, 270f.

4. John Dod and Robert Cleaver (1610 edn.) A Plaine and Familiar Exposition of the Ten Commandments, p. 339f.

speake truly and tell no lye") and reminds them that "a wise man would bee ashamed to speake the truth foolishly, when it will doe harme and no good." He asks them to consider that they "may often sinne more, in speaking knowne truth with an ill minde, then if (through infirmitie) they should speake and untruth with desire and purpose of doing good."

Baxter is the most lenient of our moralists. Like Ames, he is indignant at the Jesuit teaching on mental reservation,¹ and like Ames, he recognizes the legitimacy of silence. But he goes much further. He reasons that it is not necessary to speak the truth to everyone answered, or to speak all of it. He cites, as an example of what he means, a soldier taken by the enemy. He "may tell the truth when he is asked in things that will do no harm to his king and country; but he must conceal the rest, which would advantage the enemy against them." It is even "lawful by speech to deceive another, yea, and to intend it;" as long as it is neither sinful nor hurtful. Here he is thinking again of the military and the validity of their deceiving by strategems. In all this, he quotes as his authority, Augustine: "There are some lies which are spoken for another's safety or commodity, not in malice, but in benignity, as the midwives to Pharoah."

The Puritans never get much beyond the scholastic approach to the problem. With Wakefield² we could wish that they were more Evangelical. It is true that they never saw truth as ex-

1. A Key for Catholics, Pt. I, 339.

2. Wakefield, op. cit., p. 120.

istential or as a right relation to God in the way, for instance, that Dietrich Bonhoeffer clearly saw it;¹ yet, they did tend away from the absurdity of Kant and the rigorism of later pietism.

The problem of lying is usually treated in the larger context of "The Government of the Tongue". Such government, writes Perkins,² "containeth two parts, holy speech, and holy silence." According to the Cambridge pastor, the marks of Holy speech are right matter and proper manner. "The matter is commonly one of these three: either God, our neighbour, or our selves." He deplores the common custom of prefacing every sentence with such exclamations as "O Lord! O God! O Merciful God! O Jesus! O Christ! etc." In talking about our neighbour, "wee are to consider whether the thing which we are about to speake, be good or evill." And we ought never to be found either boasting or denouncing ourselves.

"In the manner of our speaking three things are to be pondered: what must be done before we speake; what in speaking, what after we have spoken." Thinking should precede speaking, for by this exercise "are condemned idle words, that is, such words as are spoken to little or no end, or purpose." The speech itself should be characterized by truthfulness, reverence, modesty, meekness, sobriety, urbanity ("whereby men in seemely manner use pleasantnesse in talke for recreation, or for such delight as is joynd with profit to themselves and others.... The usual time of mirth is at meates.") and fidelity. "After a man hath spoken

1. Ethics, pp. 326-334.

2. (A Direction for the Government of the Tongue, according to Gods Word), Works, I, 440-452.

his minde, very few wordes more are to be added."

Perkins's belief, that "godly silence is as excellent a virtue as holy speech," was reiterated by Ball¹ and others. It is to be observed "when the speaking of the least word is hurtful." Perkins cites here the case of the father and son, both on their death bed. The son dies first, and the father then asks if his son has died. To answer "no", would be to lie; to say "yes", would only add grief to the father's already ailing state; therefore, "silence is best." It is to be observed, too, as regards our own secrets, the sins of our neighbours and "al unseemely matter, al things unknowne, things which concern us not, things above our reach." It is to be observed before "Malitious enemies of religion;" those, such as magistrates, and our elders, before whom we are forbidden to speak until first spoken to; and "Fooles and pratlers". Ball adds a fifth person to this list: "In the presence of weak Christians we must forbear to dispute of questions and matters of doubt, that might turn them out of the way, or weaken their faith." Amid this stress upon the virtue of silence one dissident voice reminds that it can also become a vice, as when "Justice is obstructed by it, charity is omitted, our company offended by it, and God's honour questioned by our failure to testify publicly."²

Pleasures and Recreation

The Puritans looked upon life as a wholly serious matter, yet

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1. Cf. Ball, op. cit., Bk. 4, 309-333.
 2. (How Must We Govern our Tongue?), A Supplement to the Morning-Exercise at Cripple-gate, pp. 335-358.

they found time for pleasure of the right kind. Downname's¹ categories are useful in assessing what for them was legitimately pleasurable and what was frivolously evil. He divides pleasures into three groups: "divine and holy", "naturall and civill", and "carnall and wicked". The first group is lawful, for they are "that principall joy and pleasure which every Christian ought chiefly to affect and desire, as being most excellent sweete and comfortable." Natural and civil pleasures, such as meats, drinks, apparel, horses, music, and recreations, are also lawful, because they are the gifts of God and approved by the Scriptures. These differ from the pleasures of the first group in that they are not absolutely or immutably good; their goodness is determined by the end for which they are used. Carnal and worldly pleasures, as drunkenness², chambering and wantonness, lust and uncleanness, unlawful sports and recreations, are all evil and wicked.

We direct our attention now to the chief of these pleasures, recreation. Much has been written about the Puritan attitude to pleasure and the use of leisure time; some of it is true, some of it is false. The reason for this apparent misunderstanding is partly attributable to the Puritans themselves; there is nothing like complete agreement among them. For instance, they strongly objected to The Book of Sports (1633), the purpose of which was to encourage men to substitute open-air pursuits for Sunday fre-

1. The Christian Warfare Against the Devill, World and Flesh (1634 edn), Lib. 2, 454-457.

2. By drunkenness the Puritans meant excessive drinking, cf. Ames, op. cit., Bk. III, 78-81.

quenting of the ale-houses.¹ Lady Margaret Hoby, on the other hand, saw nothing wrong with spending part of the Lord's Day discussing "the Lawfullnes of huntunge in it selfe."² In the same year, Prynne willingly suffered the loss of both his ears, five thousand pounds, and personal freedom, for the sake of his belief in the evils of dancing and other amusements, as set forth in his book, Histriomastix.³ Yet, as Scholes demonstrates,⁴ other Puritans were not so censorious; Cromwell and Bunyan, in particular, had no objection to the exercise, except as it was used to inflame the passions. We turn now to our moralists and their teaching on the subject.

Because life, like the bow, cannot always be bent without danger of breaking, Perkins⁵ saw recreations as necessary, but only in things indifferent. His teaching sets the tone for later writers. Downname⁶ calls recreation "an intermission of our labours," because it "inableth us to hold out in our labours, and to performe all good duties with more vigour, and in much greater perfection." Indifferent sports like hunting,⁷ hawking, fishing, fowling running, leaping, wrestling, fencing, shooting, are all lawful, as long as they are not cruelly used or wrongly abused.⁸

1. Cf. Hugh Martin, Puritanism and Richard Baxter, p. 23f.
2. Meads, Diary of Lady Margaret Hoby, p. 153.
3. Martin, op. cit., p. 92.
4. Scholes, The Puritans and Music in England and New England, pp. 58-80.
5. Works, II, 140-143.
6. Downname, Guide to Godlynesse, Bk. 3, 262-279.
7. Cf. Adams, (Politic Hunting), Works, I, 1-18, for an example of the preacher's defense of hunting. His text is: Esau was a cunning Hunter."
8. Cf. Perkins, op. cit., Ames, op. cit., Bk. V, 218, and Downname, op. cit. All three men give the lie to Macaulay's epigram: "The Puritan hated bearbaiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators," History of England, I, 168.

But recreation made of the sins of men, as common plays, which "are nothing else but representation of the vices and misdemeanours of men;"¹ along with courting of women, profane interludes, wanton dancing, goat-like jumps and frisks of women, cards and dicing,² are not lawful. These things are not indifferent and their ends are not just.

Richard Rogers³ set forth seven rules by which the Christian could test the lawfulness of his recreation: (1) The manner of it must be prescribed by God's word. (2) It should direct our gaze to God. (3) In refreshing the body, the soul must not be injured. (4) It must be honest. (5) It should not arouse the passions. (6) It should not be performed with evil companions. (7) It should not covet gain or waste time. Bolton also advises that recreation should neither be costly, nor seek private gain.⁴ But with Baxter we shall reserve the question of gambling until a later section.

Christian Economics

Marriage and Divorce

Ames⁵ begins his discussion with the question: "Which is the more excellent state, Marriage or single Life?" His answer ac-

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1. Perkins, op. cit., Cf., also, Ames, op. cit., Bk. V, 216, and Baxter, Works, III, 615.
 2. Baxter objected to cards and dice because they did not provide suitable bodily exercise. Works, III, 616.
 3. Seven Treatises, p. 496f.
 4. Bolton, op. cit., II, 154-180.
 5. Ames, op. cit., Bk. V, 196-205.

cords with Paul's statement in I Corinthians, except that he gives no such personal observation as the Apostle felt compelled to make. For Ames, both are excellent. Perkins,¹ in his treatise, Christian Eoconomie, refutes altogether the notion that celibacy is better than marriage. Baxter,² on the other hand, although himself a happily married man, is not so sure. He lists twenty inconveniences of the married life, especially to be considered by those intending the ministry. They range from the usual: "Marriage ordinarily plungeth men into excess of worldly care;" to the prejudiced: "it is no small patience which the natural inbecility of the female sex requireth you to prepare;" to the ludicrous: "it is not a little care and trouble, that servants will put you to." On the whole the Puritans upheld marriage infusing it with holiness.³

A good deal of attention is focused upon particular problems connected with the contracting of marriage. Ames and Baxter are not in complete agreement on consanguinity or affinity. Ames finds it unlawful on sociological grounds. Baxter declares it legal on Scriptural grounds: "Adam's son did lawfully marry their own sisters" and "Noah's sons did marry their cousin-germans." But he now questions the necessity and advisability of such marriages. Ames rules out of his discussion any such affinity as the papists suggest exists in the case of adopted children.

1. Works, III, 673ff.

2. Works, IV, 1ff.

3. Cf. William Schlatter, Social Ideas of Religious Leaders, 1660-1688, pp. 8-18.

The necessity of parental consent, a principal concept of the seventeenth century,¹ undergoes a marked change between the time of Perkins and that of Baxter. Perkins writes: "In the marriage of the childe the parent is the principle agent...hee may command his childe to marry, and to marry a person thus or thus qualified." Ames agrees. Both uphold the patriarchial structure of the family by stating that where there is disagreement between parents the father's consent or lack of it is of more authority then the mother's. Clarke² quotes Perkins on the necessity of parental consent but then adds that children "may in a reverend manner intreat their parents not to presse them" to marry one who they do not love. Baxter goes even further. He allows that a child may take the safer course and disobey his parents because "it is the smaller sin to choose to disobey his parents, rather than to live in the flames of lust and the filth of unchastity." It is clear that as the importance of the element of love increased the necessity for parental consent decreased. But love and the freedom of choice were not successful in dislodging altogether the belief in the parents' right to choose their children's mates.

The corollary problem of secret marriages is also discussed, especially whether or not parents can break them. Perkins³ is emphatic on this point. He asserts that parents cannot only break such contracts, even in the case of one who "deflours a maid", but that a secret marriage by nature "is not a divine or spiritual conjunction". Ames,⁴ quoting from Numbers 30:4,5, supports his tutor.

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1. Cf. Schlatter, op. cit.
 2. Clarke, op. cit., p. 196ff.
 3. Perkins, op. cit.
 4. Ames, op. cit.

¹
Baxter's opinion is involved and not conclusive. His answer turns on the age of the child and the right or wrongness of the promise. One thing is certain, though, the promise of marriage can never be invalidated even if the parents prohibit the marriage; it is still obligatory upon both parties who must wait until parental consent or death make its fulfilling possible. If marriage has already taken place and consummated, "I see no reason," argues Baxter, "to imagine that parents can dissolve it, or prohibit their cohabitation." Again, we notice a lessening of restrictions, as the century progresses.

Other problems, such as what kind of consent is necessary between two parties, the unlawfulness of polygamy, the evil of clandestine marriages, the question of whether the aged that are frigid, impotent or sterile may marry, curing of lustful love, marriage with an ungodly person, breaking of the vows of chastity or celibacy are also treated. A good deal of space is given to the discussion of the duties of husbands and wives, as well as to directions for the "1. convenient entrance into, and, 2. comfortable enjoyment of that honourable estate."² Bolton's advice for the former is:

(1) Let thy choyce be in the Lord, according to blessed Saint Pauls Rule, I Cor. 7.39, onely in the Lord.

(2) Let conjugall love warme thine heart....By a constant enter-course of which mutuall contentment in each other, the husband will be to the wife as a covering of her eyes, that shee lift not up amorously upon any man: and the wife to the husband, the pleasure of his eyes, that he may still looke upon her with sober and singular delight.

(3) In going about such an important businesse, plie the Throne of Grace with extraordinary importunitie and fervencie of Prayer.

1. Baxter, op. cit.

2. Bolton, op. cit., II, 235-244.

(4) Let the parties deale plainely and faithfully one with the other, in respect of their bodies, soules, and outward state.

And for the latter, he recommends the nurture and exercise of the virtues of love, faithfulness, patience, and "a holy care and conscience to preserve betweene themselves (for there is conjugall, as well as virginall and viduall chastity) the marriage bed undefiled, and in all honour and Christian purity."

The Puritans recognized that marriage by definition is indissoluble. But they reluctantly regarded adultery for practical reasons as a sole ground of divorce. "The reason is," writes Ames,¹ "because the divorce is allowed in favour of the innocent party." This is a privilege, not a precept, and forgiveness is not condemned. Baxter illuminates this point. The injured party is not obliged to divorce the other, but ^{he /s} free to do as he or she pleases. But "sometimes it may be a duty to expose the sin to public shame, for the prevention of it in others; and also to deliver one's self from a calamity. And sometimes there may be so great repentance, and hope of better effects by forgiving, that it may be a duty to forgive; and prudence must lay one thing with another, to discern on what side the duty lieth."²

Although they agreed that adultery was a lawful reason for divorce, they were not in agreement as to whether adultery itself nullified the marriage. Ames said it did. Clarke³ voiced the opposite opinion: "neither may the nocent, nor innocent party put the other away, but still they remain man and wife, till the cause be

1. Ames, op. cit., Bk. V, 210.

2. Works, IV, 160.

3. Clarke, op. cit.

fairly heard by a lawful Magistrate, and by him judged and determined, which is proved." Baxter's¹ answer is both legally and practically the best: "Where the laws of the land do take care for the prevention of injuries, and make any determination in the case (not contrary to the Law of God,) there it is a Christian's duty to obey those laws."

Divorce for any other reason, be it mutual consent, contagious disease, or mental cruelty, is not advocated by our divines.² In some instances, divorce on the grounds of desertion is lawful. No other Puritan goes to the extreme that Milton does in criticising the divorce laws, however, and his position can never be regarded as typical.

It is apparent that the Puritans rejected any notion of the idea that marriage was in any way sacramental. This was not to depreciate it, though, but to exalt it. For the sacramental bond depends upon some earthly tie, such as the priestly blessing, parental permission, or mutual consent; but for them a true marriage was the marriage of minds, a human union symbolic of the mystical union existing between Christ and his Church and instituted by God's law.³ Because it was a human union, they allowed divorce for the innocent party when the union was ruptured by adultery. But because it was also a divine union, instituted by God, pre-figured by Christ's wedding to the Church, and invested with holiness by the Spirit, they

1. Works, IV. 161.

2. Schlatter, *op.cit.*, p. 25, states that Perkins advocates divorce for these causes. It is true that in his Christian Oeconomie he reluctantly allows divorce on these grounds, but he never advocates it.

3. Cf. William Gouge, Of Domesticall Duties, Eight Treatises (1634 ed.), I, 109.

countenanced no other break-up of it than that allowed in God's Word.

Prayer

The Puritans held prayer to be one of the public ordinances of the Christian faith. They had much to say about its content and conduct in worship. But they were equally convinced that it was also an important private and family ¹ discipline in which Christians needed instruction. Many treatises were written on the subject, and many others included its discussion among their general writings. Practical questions concerned them most.

The mechanics of prayer, as well as the content, absorbed their thoughts. Questions of the right object and the precise length, as well as the proper posture, thought to be typical of the Puritan spirit, did exercise them; but their answers are anything but Puritanical. Allowing their trinitarian theology to affect their devotions, they reason that God the Father is the proper object of prayer, and God the Son the only way. ² After the example of David ³ and Daniel, ⁴ they urge the establishment of a regular prayer life with a fixed schedule. Before condemning this as purely puritanical rigorism listen to Downname's final word on the matter. But,

we must be ready to pray, so often as God shall give us any occasion, or as the Apostle speaketh, in every thing; that is, craving Gods blessing when we undertake any businesse, and praying his name for gracious assistance, whereby we have been inabled to achieve it; craving his protection at the approaching of danger, and his helpe and strength for the overcoming of any difficulty which affronteth us in our way. ⁵

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1. Cf. Reyner, op.cit., pp.87-97
 2. Cf. Ball, op.cit., p.348 and Norman, Cases of Conscience, pp.379-389.
 3. Psalm 55:17.
 4. Daniel 6:10.
 5. Downname, op. cit. Bk. 3, 208-212.

Ideally, pastors hoped that Christians would follow Paul's instruction and "pray without ceasing, always watching thereunto with all perseverance."¹ Ball's counsel as to the length of a prayer is also most constructive.² He legislates no iron-clad rule, preferring instead to point out the obvious, that "it is not good ordinarily to exceed to tiredness" or "out-spend natural ability." He is convinced that prayers should always be accommodated to the hearer's power of receptivity. Ministers must have regard to the ability of their congregation; with the family, "the Master may continue so long, as the power and strength of them that live therein, will bear;" while with the sick and feeble, prayer should be short and frequent. As to the question of posture, Ball curtly dismisses it by reminding Christians that the Saints of God have been known to pray kneeling and standing.³ Ames⁴ dismisses sitting because "it expresseth no reverence, nor is approved in Scripture."

One problem that did greatly exercise them was that concerning the legitimacy of using written and printed prayers. Downname's⁵ discussion is typical and representative. There are two accepted forms of prayer, he writes. The one, set forms, are invented by others, and learned by hearing or reading, or by study and meditation. Two excellent examples of the set form are the Psalms and the Lord's Prayer. All writers would agree that the Scriptures provide the best possible pattern and language for personal prayer. The other form, conceived

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1. Loc. cit.
 2. Ball, op. cit., p. 349
 3. Ball, op. cit., p. 357
 4. Ames, op. cit., Bk. IV, 42.
 5. Downname, op. cit., Bk. 3, 233-240.

prayer, is "such as upon meditation we fit to all present occasions, not using any ordinary forms of words, but expressing ourselves with such as come to our mindes." Pure extempore prayer, that which "is performed without the necessary prerequisite meditation," is held to be "scarcely tolerable or lawfull". Any objectors to the thesis that set forms of prayers were as lawful as conceived prayer, and evidently there were many, were reminded that Paul time and again used the same form of prayers and the same words of salutations and valedictions.¹ Baxter adds that nothing but very great ignorance could make one doubt of the validity of set forms of prayer.²

There are other problems besides these mentioned. They wonder about the necessity of prayer, a question which Wakefield notes to have been posed by both Aquinas and Calvin.³ Ball's⁴ answer agrees with Perkins⁵ and the others. The repetition of our prayers is an act of worship. It is an act of submission and obedient faith, for by our prayers we acknowledge God as the giver of every good and perfect gift. Our praying is a necessary element in the divine work, for though the granting is the free will and pleasure of God, "the manner of obtaining doth require Prayers." For does not the Father instruct the Son, "to whom the Father gave all things," to ask of me and "I will give thee the Heathens for thine Inheritance."⁶

The Puritans are also occupied with the problems of unanswered prayer. As one would expect they believed that prayers were answered.⁷ But because the answer was not always readily discernable some explanation was necessary. Thomas Goodwin⁸ divides prayer into three classes,

1. Cf. Ball, op. cit., Bk. 5, 353-360.

2. Works, IV, 291.

3. Wakefield, op. cit., p. 72.

4. Ball, op. cit., 337f.

5. Cf. (The Lord's Prayer) Works, I, p. 326ff.

6. Psalm 2:8.

7. Baxter, Works, IV, 304.

8. (The Return of Prayer), Works, III, 365-374.

according to subject and object, and ventures this answer to the problem of unanswered prayer. Prayers for the Church and for the accomplishment of future things cannot expect an answer in the present, but they will be answered in heaven. Yet one should receive a secret impression that these things shall come to pass. Prayers for others, friends and kindred, and for temporal blessing, presents a different problem. It is important in such prayers to remember that God's promises are general and not particular. In applying general promises to particular people, as we do in prayer, we may expect one of three answers: the fulfilling of the prayer's request in that person, or in some other for whom we have concern, or the casting out of our prayers and heart that person for whom we have petitioned, because God intends them no mercy. In joint or co-operative prayer we are least likely to see an answer. But if our heart did sympathise with the other we can be assured that God heard our prayer and that He will give evidence of our contribution. This was the case with aged Simeon who prayed with all Jerusalem for the coming of Messiah. God acknowledged his effort by carrying him into the Temple just at the time of the presentation of the infant Jesus.¹ Finally, he concludes, if the thing prayed for was for ourselves, then the answer itself is testimony enough to the fact that God does answer. Our writers liberally illustrate from the scriptures examples of the way self prayer is answered; they particularly demonstrate how these answers sometimes differ from the petitioner's expectation.

1. Luke 2:27f.

Many treatises on prayer and most catechisms contain an exposition of the Lord's Prayer. For the Puritans it is the noblest set form of prayer as well as the most perfect model for developing prayers written.¹ And access to the Throne of Grace is considered possible only through a happy blending of these two.

Christian Ecclesiastics

Keeping the Sabbath

If there is any one single Puritan influence still felt on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean, it is their attitude toward the Sabbath or Lord's Day. Then, as now, pastors were frequently queried about how the day should be kept. Most of the manuals on cases of conscience contain sections specifically designed to answer such questions.² And, as in Downname's Guide to Godlynesse,³ they also set forth some positive helps for the sanctifying of the day.

Their understanding of the purpose of the day accords with the Biblical teaching. They saw it as both a day of rest and a day of worship.⁴ All work for personal profit is forbidden, but moderate recreation, such as walking in the air and listening to music, is not. But such restful activities, designed to refresh the body, are to be enjoyed only after the duties of God's service have been accomplished. After reading Downname's list of such duties one may rightly wonder if any time was ever left. The morning is to be spent in private meditation, prayer, reading of the Scriptures, and preparation for public worship; and in the worship itself. The afternoon should be taken

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1. Ames, op. cit., Bk. IV, 41, cautions: "it is not expedient to sticke to this forme....Because by this meanes, it is become among the Papists like a charme."
 2. Baxter, Works, V, "Ecclesiastical Cases". 432ff.
 3. Bk. 3, p. 381ff.
 4. Cf. Martin, op. cit., pp. 107-112.

up in holy conversation, visiting the sick, and evening worship. While the night is most profitably spent with the family in singing the Psalms, reading the Scriptures or other profitable religious literature, and prayer.

Not everyone so spent the day, Mr. Badman "could not endure the Lord's Day, because of the holiness that did attend it;"¹ but one who did, is Lady Margaret Hoby. An idea of the manner in which she kept the Sabbath is provided by this excerpt from her Diary:²

the Lordes Day 12

after I was redie, I went to privatt praiers then to breakfast; then I walked tell church time Mr Hoby, and after to dinner; after which I walked and had speech of no serious maters tell 2: a clock; then I wrett notes into my bible tell :3: and after :4: I came againe from the church, walk, and medetated a Litle, and againe wrett som other notes in my bible of that I had Learned tell :5: att which time I returned to examination and praiers; and after I had reed some of bond of the subath, I walked abroad; and so to supper, and after to praiers, and lastly to bed.

Singing

Percy Scholes begins his remarkable book, The Puritans and Music In England and New England, with these words: "This book has an active purpose. It aims to put an end once for all, to the circulation of a calumny." The calumny is that the Puritans neither respected nor tolerated music. He quotes no less than forty-five subscribers to this obloquy, among them are Sir Walter Scott, G.K. Chesterton and Lord Macaulay. Scholes' well documented work supports his thesis and so, too, do our moralists.³

1. Bunyan, Works, III, 600.

2. Meads, op. cit., p. 62.

3. Cf. Davies, Worship of the English Puritans, pp. 162-181, for a shorter study of this subject. He traces the successive acceptance of psalm singing from the Presbyterians through the Independents to the Baptists.

They recognized as lawful, not only the singing of psalms ("the composures of holy David"), but also the singing of hymns ("the Songs of some other excellent man recorded in Scripture") and spiritual songs ("odes of some other holy and good man not mentioned in Scripture")¹ They encourage such singing in public, Baxter testifies: "I am not willing to join in such a church where I shall be shut out of this noble work of praise,"² with the family, and in private;³ because "it brings a kind of sweet delight to godly minds," and "it doth more properly agree to joy."⁴ As singing can be either good or evil, depending upon its content and use, directions for right singing were deemed necessary. Wells's⁵ are five in number: Sing with understanding; that is, writes Ames,⁶ "put on, as it were, the person, either of them, of whom those Psalms were composed, or of them, who composed them, that what ever is spoken there, we may, in some sort, take it as spoken to our selves." Sing with affection as did the Early Church. Sing with real and excited grace. Sing with faith and in the Spirit. Neglect not preparatory prayer. Singing is never relegated to the position of being just an extra part of worship, but is ever esteemed as an integral element in the Christian life. It lightens and exhilarates the soul; prepares one for suffering; "Sweetens a Prison"; and is the ideal vehicle for demonstrating our praise and thanksgiving, allowing us to make "sweets melody in Gods ears".⁴

1. (Wells, How we may make Melody in our Hearts to God in Singing of A Supplement to the Morning-Exercise at Cripple-gate, pp.124-141

2. Works, V, 500.

3. The Westminster Directory for the Public Worship of God includes this rubric: "It is the Duty of Christians to praise God publickly by singing of Psalms together in the congregation, and also privately in the Family." Confession of Faith, etc., p. 464.

4. Ames, op. cit., Bk. IV, 43.

5. Wells, op. cit.

6. Ames, op. cit., Bk. IV, 44.

7. Downham, op. cit., Bk 3, 240-242.

The lyrics are always more important than the melody, and they caution against being "guided by the Tune" instead of by "the Words of the Psalm."¹ This reverence for the Scriptures explains why psalmody became the exclusive and official form of Puritan singing; and further accounts for the fact that elegance of style was not a notable quality in their Psalm versions, and unison singing was preferred before harmony.² Yet out of this somewhat restricted tradition came the great eighteenth century hymnologists, Watts, Wesley and Cowper; they marched forward as liberators, but also as debtors.

Christian Politics

Choice of Company

The Puritans saw society as consisting of an inner circle of saints and an outer circle comprising the men of this world. But, unlike the medieval monastics, the Christian was never allowed to shun the company of the outer circle for exclusive participation in the inner one. The imperative to prove their election necessitated trading, bargaining, buying and selling, with the worldly. Yet the company of the saints was the real prize; it is, wrote Bolton,³ "thine onely Paradise and Heaven upon Earth; the very flowre and festivall of all thy refreshing time in this vale of teares." While, on the other hand, keeping company with the men of this world presented the constant danger of being infected with their sin and so incurring

1. Wells, op. cit., cf., also, Directory, p. 464.

2. See Eric Routley, Hymns and Human Life and The Music of Christian Hymnody for a critique of Puritan psalmody.

3. Works, II, 73-88.

the punishment which God metes out to them. Downname reminds the saints of the case of Lot, who was "led away in that common captivitie with the Sodomites; and dearely bought the pleasures of the Countrie, by partaking in the punishment of the people."¹

The dangers of such company, continues Downname,² are numerous. Their example allures and persuades to sin, especially when noted in superiors. Their example nourishes pride and security and turns one from repentance. The example of the wicked proves vexatious to God's servants, is impossible of overcoming, and so may prove the down fall of one of God's elect. Therefore, he concludes, "it is best for a man either to bee conversant with himselfe, or to keepe company with those who may better him, or whom he may better."

He is alert to the danger inherent in such a stand, however, for there is no place in Puritanism for the descendents of Simon Styletes, and so^h urges the saints not to shun all company, only that of the unrighteous. Keeping company with the righteous was the command of God. He did not think it good that man should be alone;³ and the example of David, who "though he were a King, yet made himselfe a companion of all them than feared God, and kept his precepts."⁴ The value of such company is incalculable concludes Downname:⁵ (1) "it taketh away the tediousnesse of our journey, when we have good company to travaile with us;" (2) it "doth much further us by their

1. The Christian Warfare, Lib. I, 417f.

2. Loc. cit.

3. Genesis 2:18.

4. Psalm 119:63,79.

5. Downname, op. cit.

good example;" (3) "it is a powerfull meanes to restraine and pull us backe, when we are ready to fall into any sinne;" and (4) "good company is a singular helpe unto a godly life, as it fitteth and enableth us to use all Christian duties one toward another."

Although Clarke¹ agrees in theory with the above Puritan stand, he does not agree in practice. He finds it impossible to avoid conversation with the wicked, as well as unscriptural. For some of our relatives may be among the men of this world and Paul commands that "we must afford them our outward presence familiarly"² even though "we cannot be of one heart, and minde with them."³ He therefore formulates several rules for conducting a limited fraternization with the worldly. Labour for a greater abundance of grace when they have vice in order to convert them. Be sincere in your heart, lest you join their company for your own pleasure instead of their conversion. Prepare yourself before hand, with prayer, meditation and the like, that you be protected against spiritual infection. One good method of preparation is to furnish ourselves with matter - "either some part of Gods word which we have lately heard preached of, or that we have read or meditated upon," or "some work of God lately fallen out," - to edify our conversation. If this is not done the conversation will likely become mere "table-talk". Where such preparation is impossible he counsels: "let us read, or cause to be read, some portion of Scripture, out of which we may be the better furnished."

Of course, he concludes, there are some "wicked men as we may not make our companions". Those that are out of the Church, such as

1. Clarke, *op. cit.*, pp. 371-382.

2. I Corinthians 7:12,13.

3. Acts 4:32.

Jews, Turks, Pagans, etc.; those that are justly excommunicated for blasphemy, heresy, or profaneness; and such, though they continue in the Church, yet by their works they show that they are meer carnal, are not fit companions. Here is graphically illustrated one of the weaknesses of Puritanism, for in their slavish attendance upon the letter of the Word they oft times obscured or missed altogether the spirit of the Word. When Clarke's instruction is placed beside Christ's example, it sounds miserably bigoted and wholly inadequate. When charged with eating with tax collectors and sinners, He replied: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."¹

Wealth: Its Acquisition and Use.

Much has been said, and much more still needs to be said, about Puritanism and the acquisition of wealth. What is certain, though, is that they held that riches and its acquiring was not only lawful but necessary. But as with pleasures, its lawfulness was directly related to its utilitarian value. This is not to imply, however, that giving was the only virtue connected with money. Downname² unashamedly admits that the "degree or measure of riches, is to have not only things necessary, but also to have some sufficiency & reasonable plenty of them." And of course, the first responsibility of those so blessed is to exercise "parsimony or thriftiness, whereby we honestly spare our goods and preserve them from being wastfully and notoriously consumed," and "frugality, whereby we honestly spend our well gotten goods soberly and moderately upon our own good and necessary uses, for our profit and honest delight."

1. Mark 2:17 (R.S.V.).

2. Guide to Godliness, Bk. 2, 135-143.

The second responsibility is the exercise of charity, in the Church and the State. Downname places the maintenance of the King and the relieving of the poor in the forefront of State charities. Thomas Gouge,¹ noted for his own acts of charity, lists the following worthy Church charities: contributing toward the proclamation of the gospel in foreign parts;² setting up and maintaining religious lecturers; adding to the maintenance of ministers; maintaining poor ministerial students; distributing Bibles and catechisms; and erecting schools.

The mechanics of charity are also discussed. Christians are reminded that there are appropriate times for giving, such as: "When accidentally thou meetest with any fit objects of mercy;" or "when God by his providence hath any way blessed and increased thy stock and store;" and on special days, particularly the Lord's Day, days of Thanksgiving, and days of Fasting and Prayer.³ They also raise the question of how much to give. Gouge legislates no law, but^{he} states that most of those he knows give a tenth of their income as did Jacob of old. As to the means of giving, he suggests that it may be done in one of two ways, either weekly, on the Lord's Day, or annually. The former way may best appeal to daily labourers, while the latter seems better suited to merchants and tradesmen.

Charity is endless, though, and difficult of beginning. Therefore, Gouge offers this logical grading of worthy needs: (1) members

1. (Sermon 11), The Morning Exercise at Cripple-gate, pp. 241-278.
2. The Puritan interest in missions covered a wide range. Thomas Gouge was particularly concerned about Wales. Joseph Alleine, after his ejection, considered going to China. Baxter carried on an extensive correspondence with John Elliot, the "Apostle to the Indians", about the latter's work.
3. Gouge, op. cit.

of our own household, (2) our poor relatives, (3) members of our congregation, (4) other Christians, (5) needy strangers, (6) those in prison, or sick, (7) worthy causes in distant lands. Common beggars, too lazy to work, are not fit objects of charity; but the weak, sick, lame, blind, and the like, are.

Puritan charity was anything but altruistic and the personal and private profit accruing from one's giving is heavily underscored. Gouge tells this story: "I can tell you of one yet living, who finding little coming in by his trade, resolved upon two things. 1. To be more careful in Sanctifying the Lords Day. 2. To set apart the tenth of his increase for charitable uses. Whereupon he gained so much in a few years, that he gave over his Calling, and ever since liveth upon his Rents." Downname¹ talks of its spiritual profit: "it replenisheth our hearts with all sound joy and true comfort, as it is an infallible signe of all good in us, and belonging unto us, of all grace in this life, and glory and happiness in the life to come." This is even more pronounced in another place.

Finally, charity is most necessary, if ever we meane to attaine to eternall salvation, or to escape hellish destruction; seeing the sentence of life or death shall at the day of Judgement be pronounced, according to the workes of charity, either performed or neglected by us, as being the chiefe outward evidences, whereby our inward grace of faith, apprehending Christ unto Salvation, may, to the justifying of Gods righteous Judgements, be unto all demonstrated and declared.

A close comparison of the Authorized Version with the Revised Standard Versions shows that the seventeenth century translators equated charity with *αγαπή*. But it was personal profit, as well as duty, piety, and fear, that motivated Puritan charity, and not love.

1. The later Puritan attitude to buying and selling and borrowing and lending is treated by Schlatter, The Social Ideas of Religious Leaders, 1660-1688, pp. 87-225.

As one might expect, a place is reserved in their discussion for the treatment of the questions of buying and selling and borrowing and lending. In the former, honesty is the first and most important rule to be observed. Therefore, Downname¹ places responsibility for the proper transaction of business upon both the seller and buyer. Both are to assure themselves that the item for sale has not been stolen; that it is vendible, here he decries the accepted practice of selling benefices, justice, and false witness; and that its sale is profitable for both the Church and State. The Seller and buyer each have their particular responsibilities along with those they share in common. The seller is obliged to declare the true value of the object for sale, and to sell it at market price. The buyer must not take advantage of the seller because of his simplicity, or fail to make payment, or debase the commodity which he buys.² Few men attempted to solve the more detailed cases of conscience about trading, perhaps because they knew too little about the mysteries of buying and selling.³ Baxter was one who did.

He gives equal treatment, too, to cases about borrowing and lending.⁴ Most writers go no further than to show their reticence to the practice of usury or to sound out some general principles to be followed by borrowers and lenders.⁵ Clarke's discussion is typical. He lists four responsibilities of every borrower: he must return or restore that which was borrowed; he must return it within the

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1. Downname, op.cit., Bk. 3, 321.328
 2. Clarke, op.cit., pp.201-208.
 3. Works, VI, 306-314.
 4. Ibid., VI, 315-327.
 5. Clarke, op.cit., pp.193-196

agreed time; if it is necessary to restore the item, he must return full measure; and if the item borrowed is money, he must not use it to maintain his pride, or for carnal pleasure. The lender's responsibilities are three: he must not lend to any that intend to put it to an evil use; he must not put his money out to usury; and he must not require the thing lent to be returned when it would work a hardship on the borrower.

1 Betting and Gambling

The problem of betting and gambling, and of the proper attitude of the Puritan towards them, was an oft discussed one. But there was no general agreement among moralists.

2

Perkins comes closest to an absolute condemnation of all forms of gambling. In his discussion on recreation he writes:

Games of hazard and those, in which hazard onely bears the sway, and orders the fame, and not wit; wherein also there is (as we say) chance, yea, meere chance in regard of us. Of this kinds is Dicing, and sundry games at the Tables and Cards. Now games that are of meere hazard, by the consent of godly Divines, are unlawfull.

It is instructive to note the three reasons he gives in support of this opinion: (1) Such games are lots, and "the use of a lot is an act of religion, in which we referre unto God the determination of things of the moment, that can no other way bee determined;"

(2) "such games are not recreations, but rather matter of stirring up troublesome passions, as feare, sorrow, etc. and so they

1. For a comparison of the Puritan and Anglican attitude, see Thomas Wood's "The Seventeenth Century English Casuists on Betting and Gambling", Church Quarterly Review, No. 298, pp.159-174
2. Works, II, 141ff.

distemper the body and minde;" and (3) "covetousnesse is commonly the ground of them all." Perkins's thought is clear. If all games of chance are not unlawful it is at least "farre safer and better to obtaine from them, than to use them;" for "the end of our recreation must bee to refresh our bodies and mindes" and "it is then an abuse of Recreation, when it is used to win other mens money."

The most systematic treatment of the question is that given by Ames,¹ in a chapter intituled: "Of Contracts by wagers, lots, and gaming."

He begins by defining his terms. A wager is "a contract, in which two contending about some truth, doe wager somewhat on both sides, from whence hee shall have reward that attaines the truth, and hee punished which doth not." As long as such a wager is not for something sinful, or does not involve "the notorious losse of either party", it is lawful. A lot is defined as "a contract, in which by the force of a foregoing agreement, lots are cast, that it may appeare, who ought to bee Master of this or that thing." It is lawfully used as a means for deciding ownership, by several equal claimants, and for determining elections. It is sinfully used, "if any shall depend upon the stars, or spirits, or fortune for the directing of the lots;" or "if that is intended which in itselife is unlawfull;" and if it is used without "due reverence", because "the casting of lots in its own nature, hath a particular respect to the special providence of God." Finally, a gaming contract is defined as one "by which the players doe agree betwixt themselves, that something shall bee yeelded by the conquerer to the Conquerour."

1. Ames, Bk. V, 244-248.

Such a contract in itself is lawful. But "an eager intention of gaine, maketh it vitious." About this, Ames would have us remember four things. In the first place, "the end of play is recreation, and delight of the players." Secondly, it is a "prodigall rashnesse" for players of equal skill "to hazard a considerable summe of money without necessity." Thirdly, "no mortall man is so absolute a Lord of his money, that hee can alienate, or expose to the danger of alienation, any notorious summe without just cause approved of in the word of God; which cannot bee affirmed of gaming as it is in its selfe." Fourthly, "it is not lawfull for any man to gaine by anothers lease;" and when the intention of gaming is to profit in this way, then such gain is a "filthy lucre". He condemns the wagering of more money "then a man of such a state can reasonably bestow of his recreation," and with Perkins, "those games which onely are by chance, or doe especially rely upon chance."

Compared with the others, the judgement of Baxter seems surprisingly lenient.¹ He allows that it is lawful "to lay wagers upon the credit or confidence of one another's opinions or assertions in discourse," as long as these three conditions are met: (1) that the wager is regarded as a penalty for "rash and false ascertains, and not to gratify the covetousness of the other;" (2) that "it be no greater a sum than can be demanded and paid, without breach of charity;" and (3) that "it be no other but what both parties are truly willing to stand to the loss of, if either of them lose." He permits wagers upon horse races, dogs, hawks, bear-baiting, or such games, if the amount agreed upon is not great and can be paid without hurt, and if the sport is not cruel to the animals, nor endangers human life.

1. Works, VI, 328-330.

It must never lead to an undue waste of time, "which is the common malignity of such recreations."

He himself is not sure whether or not it is lawful to play at cards, dice for money, or to take part in a lottery; but he admits of the possibility of these being lawful, in which case the same rules apply as in playing other games for money, like bowls,¹ running and shooting. These he allows when the game itself is not sinful, when the "wager be laid for sport, and not covetousness," and when "no more be laid than is suitable to the sport, and the lose doth well and willingly pay." Baxter insists, however, that if the loser be unwilling to pay, he may not ordinarily be compelled to do so, for that would turn the sport into covetousness.

Suicide

If John Rous' Diary is any indication, suicide was more prevalent in the seventeenth century than one would at first imagine. He records three cases all within a year of each other. The first is that of a son who hangs himself "at his father's dore".² The second is the gruesome account of a young woman, "thought to be very religious," who arose in the middle of the night, went into "a wood-chamber" and "cutte her own throate", leaving "the knife in the wound".³ The most sensational case of the day was that of Doctor Buttes, Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University, who hung himself on Easter Sunday, shortly after a royal visit from Charles I.⁴

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1. Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 103, is incorrect when he states: "It is true that bowls were frowned upon by the Puritans." As Baxter points out, *Works*, VI, 330, it was the abuses occasionally associated with the game to which they objected.
 2. *Diary of John Rous*, ed. Mary Anne Everett Green, (Camden Society,) p. 46.
 3. *Ibid.*, p. 60.
 4. *Ibid.*, p. 70.

The Puritan attitude to suicide agrees with most of Christendom: "Selfe-murder be a sin which Nature hath as strongly inclined Man against, as any sin in the world."¹ They show an insight beyond their times when they note, as Baxter does, that "the commonest cause is prevailling Melancholy."² Some, like Downname, preferring the more conventional theory, labelled the cause as Satan working through afflictions, fears, miseries, losses, disgraces and conscience.³ All agreed with Downname, though, that "however there are many causes of this selfe-murder, and many excuses alledged, to make it seems sometime tolerable, and sometime commendable, if not to others, yet at least to those who commit it, notwithstanding it is for no cause, in any kind, at any time, or upon any occasion whatsoever lawfull or excusable."⁴ The reason for this prohibition is plain enough: "the self-murderer sinneth most hainously against God; hee offendeth also grievously against his neighbours."⁵

The modern problem of euthanasia, so closely connected with the question of suicide, is, of course, not treated by the Puritans. But a possible hint as to their would-be position is provided by Ames.⁶ His words sound strangely favourable: "it is lawfull and sometimes just, that a man suffer himselfe to bee killed by another; and not forbidding them when it is in his power, whether it bee for the satisfaction of Justice, or for the great good of others either publike or private, for this is not to doe evill, but onely to suffer it."

1. Baxter, Works, VI, 138

2. Loc. cit.

3. The Christian Warfare, Bk. 2, 70-80.

4. Loc. cit.

5. Loc. cit.

6. Ames, op. cit., Bk. V, 187.

Before jumping to a hasty conclusion we should underscore the phrase, for the great good of others either publike or private. In this same chapter, he makes his position clearer. He asks: "Whether in no case it bee lawfull to kill ones selfe?" His answer is: "First, it is a grievous sinne against the authority of God, who is the sole Lord of life."¹ We can safely say that Ames, and like minded Puritans, would have found the proposed practice of euthanasia reprehensible.

Concerning the question of deliberately exposing one's self to a deadly danger, they are more precise. "It is lawfull," states Ames,² as in the case of soldiers. But according to Perkins,³ it is not always the necessary course of action. He voices a question which many of the century pondered in their hearts: "Whether may a man flie in the plague time?" His answer is to the point: "Such as he hindered by their calling may not; as Magistrates and Pastors,⁴ having charge of soules; yet free men, not bound by calling, may." For he reasons, "a man may provide for his owne safetie, if it bee not to the hindrance of another."

Baxter⁵ concludes his discussion of the subject with several helpful directions to "the chief preventing of this sin": (1) Prevent melancholy, or cure it, if contracted; (2) take heed of worldly trouble and discontent; (3) mortify the passions of the flesh; (4) take heed of sinning against conscience; (5) fear Hell; and (6) understand the

1. Ibid., Bk. V, 136.

2. Ames, op. cit., p. 187.

3. Works, I, 58.

4. A frequent charge labelled against the Anglican clergy, by the Non-conformists, was that they fled their London parishes during the Great Fire when duty demanded that they stay.

5. Works, VI, 138-142.

wonders of mercy revealed, and bestowed on mankind in Jesus Christ.

War

Schlatter¹ points out that the seventeenth century saw the beginnings of modern warfare. In support of this statement, he makes reference to the surprising statistic, that there were only seven calendar years in which some European states were not at war. What then, we may well ask, had the Puritans to say on the subject?

There was never any question among them, as with later generations, whether or not it should be outlawed. For, writes Ames,² if war itself is unlawful, "it had never beene allowed by God in the old Testament, which no body can deny." Further, Christ would not have taught us "to give unto Caesar the things that are Caesars," knowing that some of the monies would go for "payments for soldiers wages and costs of Warre," if "Warre simply were unlawfull." Any objections to war found in Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount" are explained away by interpretating his instructions as pertaining "to private men" and not "publike authority".

This is not to imply that the Puritans, who readily did battle with the Royalists, automatically subscribed to the lawfulness of war. They carefully distinguish between just and unjust war. The difference between them, states Ames, is that a just war is one waged in a just cause, by a just authority, "out of a seale for justice." Those who engage in such a war are obliged to adhere to certain rules. The

1. Schlatter, op. cit., p. 229. He quotes from Clarke, The Seventeenth Century, p. 98.
2. Ames, op. cit., Bk. V, 184-192.

motivation to go to war must be governed by the necessity to defend and protect the commonwealth (for only a perfect commonwealth can wage an aggressive war); the method of conducting the war must not transgress the law of God; the actual fighting must be directed only against "the Offendours and those that are guilty"; and there should be no spoiling of property, because despoilment fails to distinguish between the guilty and the innocent. Baxter's counsel to kings and nations is not dissimilar:¹

they must raise no war unnecessarily, nor for any cause be it never so just in itself, when the benefits of the war are not like to be a great good, than the war will bring hurt both to friends and does set together. A lawful offensive war is almost like a true general council; on certain suppositions such a thing may be; but whether ever the world saw such a thing, or whether ever such supposition will come to existence, is the question.

For the Puritans, the greatest moral deterrent to war was the Sixth Commandment, which they held sacred; and the most important economic deterrent was the possible damage and loss of property, which many held as equally sacred.

Summary

Manuals on cases of conscience were the Puritan pastor's text book for the instruction of the adult conscience. They were a compendium of Christian ethics based upon the Biblical ethic and prepared for all those who were daily faced with problems of error, doubt and perplexity. Early manuals were but mere reflections of Medieval casuistry, but later ones took on a distinctive Protestant and Puritan quality. They offered directions for all of life, not by the legal-

1. Works, VI, 472.

istic legislation of a code of laws, but by the systematic implanting in the conscience of Biblical truth. Although most manuals were prepared in the quiet and cloistered atmosphere of the pastoral study, they are anything but academic. Cases are always presented in the most practical way. No facet of life is left out; every obligation owed by man to God, his fellow man and himself, is treated. These manuals fulfilled a dual purpose: they were the pastor's text for instructing the conscience and the individual's standard reference on ethics and morals.

These manuals were particularly helpful in preparing those who met for Christian conference. In the next section Christian conference, as well as pastoral letter writing and discipline - three ways in which the pastor ministered to the troubled and disturbed - will be discussed.

CHAPTER V

CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE

Introduction

Having now considered the two most important means used by pastors to instruct the conscience, we turn our attention to several methods employed in counselling and resolving those disturbed and troubled in conscience. The first method to be discussed is Christian conference. It is a term frequently found in Puritan literature, applying both to Christian conversation in general and to the specific meetings of Christians for holy conversation. This chapter focuses attention on some of these meetings and on the conversation that went on in them between pastor and parishioner, by discussing both its theoretical and practical aspects. In the theoretical section, the principles motivating and underlying pastoral advising as well as the psychology of pastoral care are discussed. What is said here applies with equal validity to pastoral letter writing, to be discussed in the next two chapters. In the practical section we shall examine both private and public conferences; that is, the private meetings between pastor and parishioner in confession, at the sick bed and in counselling sessions, along with church conferences and group meetings.

The Theory of Puritan Pastoral Advising and Care

In the Reformed Pastor, Baxter¹ sets forth, as the main acts

1. Works, XIV, pp. 94-96.

of pastoral care, these four duties: preaching, administering the sacraments, conducting of public worship and the oversight of each member of the flock. Our discussion here is limited to the fourth duty, the "special care and oversight of each member of the flock," particularly as that was accomplished in Christian conferences.

Henry Scougal¹ writes of it:

...the greatest and most difficult work of a Minister, is in applying himself particularly to the several persons under his charge, to acquaint himself with their behaviour, and the temper of their Souls, to redress what is amiss, and prevent their future miscarriages.... 'Tis the art of Arts (saith Grégory Nazianzen in his Apologetick oration) and the most difficult of all sciences, to govern such a manifold and various creature as man....

The aims and ends of Puritan pastoral care are also well put by Scougal:²

The great business of our calling is to advance the divine life in the world, to make Religion sway and prevail, frame and mould the Souls of men into a conformity to God, and superinduce the beautiful lineaments of his blessed image upon them, to enlighten their understanding, and to inform their judgments, rectifie their wills, and order their passions, and sanctifie all their affections.

Baxter's words are not dissimilar:³

The ultimate end of our pastoral oversight is the pleasing and glorifying of God, to which is connexed the glory of the human nature also of Christ, and the glorification of his Church, and of ourselves in particular; and the nearer ends of our office, are the sanctification and holy obedience of the people of our charge; their unity, order, beauty, strength, preservation and increase; and the right worshipping of God, especially in the solemn assemblies.

To accomplish these ends through pastoral counselling, the Puritans set forth certain basic assumptions concerning the role of pastor

1. (Of the Importance and Difficulty of the Ministerial Function, Discourse IX) The life of God in the Soul of Man, p. 371f.
2. Ibid., p. 363f.
3. Works, XIV, 79.

and parishioner in Christian conversation. The principles, derived from these assumptions, were held as being indispensable for the conducting of this work:

(1) The pastor must know his people. The preacher Thomas Adams¹ puts it this way; "The physician must apply himself to the nature of his patient; so the minister to the disposition of his hearer: leading the gentle, and drawing the refractory; winning some with love, and 'pulling others out of the fire; having compassion on some, and saving others with fear,' Jude 22.23." Baxter² develops this principle more fully, The pastor must know his peoples' "inclinations and conversation,... the sins that they are most in danger of...what duties they neglect for the matter or manner,...and what temptations they are most liable to."

(2) The pastor must be ready to instruct and advise, as well as "comfort, relieve, and refresh, those that are tempted, tossed, wearied with fears and grounds of disconsolation, in times of trial and desertion."³ We have already seen something of the content and method of their instruction; it remains now, to discuss pastoral counselling or advising. Baxter's⁴ direction is:

We must be ready to give advice to those that come to us with cases of conscience, especially the great case which the Jews put to Peter, and the jailor to Paul and Silas, 'What must we do to be saved?' A minister is not only for public preaching, but to be a known counsellor for

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1. (Physic from Heaven), Works, I, 382.
 2. Works, XIV, 96.
 3. Owen, Works, XVI, 55.
 4. Works, XIV, 96.

their souls... so that each man that is in doubts and straits, should bring his case to him and desire resolution.

That Baxter means advising and not counselling is made clear by this addition: "Not that a minister should be troubled with every small matter, which judicious neighbours can give them advice in as well as he."¹ Today, the conversation that goes on between pastor and parishioner is called counselling. The Puritans, although they use the terms counsel and counselling, were more apt to call this conversation advising, and by it to mean something other than that presently assigned to the term counselling.² The basic assumption underlying all Puritan counselling is that all counsel is of God. This teaching is incorporated in the Confession of Faith,³ as well as the Shorter Catechism,⁴ and ^{it is} discussed in many treatises. This assumption, grounded upon the New Testament,⁵ has both doctrinal and practical implications. Ames⁶ sets forth the best exposition of the counsel of God. He calls it God's "deliberation concerning the doing of every thing in the best manner, after that it is of the understanding and will approved." God's

1. Loc. cit.

2. Seward Hiltner, Pastoral Counseling, p. 19, defines pastoral counselling as "the attempt by a pastor to help people help themselves through the process of gaining understanding of their conflicts." Gote Bergsten in Pastoral Psychology and H. Guntrip in Psychology for Ministers and Social Workers correct the view of Hiltner and other Americans by stressing the pastor's role as chiefly that of advisor.

3. The Confession of Faith, etc., Chap. III.

4. Ibid., (Shorter Catechism, Q. 7).

5. Ephesians 1:11.

6. The Marrow of Sacred Divinity, Bk. I, 23-31.

counsel is perfect because of his "perfect judgment, whereby he doth all things advisedly i.e. willingly and of set purpose." Owen¹ sees it as most perfectly personified in Christ, that is, in Christ are to be seen "the mysteries of the will of God, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in himself." These mysteries are God's "counsels concerning his owne eternal glory in the sanctification and salvation of the Church here below, to be united to that above." It follows, therefore, that if the counsel of God is found in Christ, it is also found in the Scriptures which reveal Christ. Thomas Manton, in a sermon from the Psalms,² draws out this idea. He lays it down as propositional and Scriptural that "the only good counsel that we can have is from God in his word,"³ and that this "counsel that God hath given us in his word is sufficient and full out to all our necessities."⁴ The word of God "is a counsellor" in at least four ways: it "will help [one] to understand how far he is concerned in such an action in point of duty and conscience;" it "will teach [one] to go to God for wisdom, James i. 6, and to observe his answer;" it "will teach [one] to ask God's leave and God's blessing;" and "the word of God teacheth a man, when he understandeth his duty, and hath God's leave, to submit the event to God, and that easeth the heart, because he may be sure of success, comfort, and support."⁵ Practically speaking, then, this means,

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1. XPIΣΤΟΛΟΓΙΑ: or, a Declaration of the Glorious Mystery of the Person of Christ - God and Man, Works, I, 541ff.
 2. (Sermon XXV, Psalm 119:24), Works, VI, 230-234.
 3. Ibid., p. 230
 4. Loc. cit.
 5. Manton, op. cit., p. 231.

as Goodwin¹ puts it, that every man must ask of God "his advice and counsel upon all occasions and in all (especially great) turnings of they life," and further, that "when thou hast thus asked and sought his advice, be sure thou follow it." Conversely, this teaching condemns those who "do not consult with God's word about their affairs, but merely live as they are acted by their own lusts," and who "go flatly against the counsel of God," and who "pretend to ask counsel from the word...that come with their own conclusions and preconceptions and prejudices against God's counsel."² The practical implications of all this for the pastor's role as counsellor cannot be minimized. First, Christian conferences were seen as extensions of public worship, and counselling as an extension of prophecyng or preaching. The pastor's role was then viewed as being prophetic; his ministry was to make known the counsel of God in Christ. This purpose conditioned his approach to individuals. His interviews were not "client-centered",³ but pastor centered. His approach was not "non-directive",⁴ but directive. The pastor did most of the talking, the parishioner the listening. The pastor, even though he might call himself counsellor, really considered himself an advisor. He advised those who came to him with doubts and troubles. His advice differed from secular advisors, however,

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1. (Of Gospel Holiness in the Heart and Life), Works, VII, 203, 206.
 2. Manton, op. cit., p. 232f.
 3. Cf. Carl R. Rogers, Counseling and Psychotherapy for a discussion of this subject.
 4. Loc. cit.

in that it was grounded on Scripture, the counsel of God.

Adams¹ sums up the pastor's role this way: "To speak properly and fully, Christ is our only physician and we are but his ministers, bound to apply this saving physic to the sickly souls of his people. It is he only that cures the carcase, the conscience." We have used the term counselling to describe what went on between Puritan pastor and parishioner in their Christian conversations, but it seems clear that the present nuance attached to the word makes its less valid as a descriptive term than the word advising. Where ever the word counselling is used, the Puritan sense of advising is to be applied to it.

(3) The object of pastoral advising is the individual, but always considered in the context of the fellowship. Baxter² writes: "The Object of our pastoral care is, all the flock: that is, the church and every member of it." He adds: "Our first care must be about the whole: and therefore the first duties to be done are public duties, which are done to the whole....But that which is less understood or considered of, is, that all the flock, even each individual member of our charge must be taken heed of, and watched over by us in our ministry." Pastoral advising, both private and public, sought to help those "that labour under some particular distemper, which keeps under their graces, and makes them temptations and troubles to others and a burden to themselves;"³ those "that are fallen under some great temptation;"⁴ and the disconsolate, sick and declining Christians.⁵

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1. Works, I, 378.
 2. Works, XIV, 82.
 3. Ibid., p. 91.
 4. Ibid., p. 92.
 5. Loc. cit.

(4) Pastors encouraged and urged their people to come to them with their problems. Richard Sibbes,¹ commenting on a verse in II Corinthians, writes that Paul's words are intended to "move people to lay open the case of their souls to their spiritual physicians upon all good occasions. People do so for the physicians of their bodies; they do so in doubtful cases for their estates. Is all so well in our souls that we need no help nor comfort? no removing of objections that the soul makes, no unloosing of the knots of conscience? Is all so clear?" Henry Scougal² puts the same sentiment in this way:

We have justly shaken off the tyranny of the Romish confession, but alas. our people go too far in the other extreme; and because they are not obliged to tell every thing to their pastor, in effect they acquaint them with nothing at all....It will be long ere any come to tell us, that they find themselves proud, or passionate, or revengeful, and enquire how they are covetous and uncharitable, and beseech us to tell them how they shall amend; to acquaint us with their temptations, and to learn the fittest methods to oppose them. We are seldom troubled with addresses of this nature, and it is hard to do any thing towards a cure, when they will not let us know the disease.

John Owen's³ exalted view of the pastoral office demands that ministers "be ready and willing to attend unto the especial cases that may be brought unto them, and not to look on them as unnecessary diversions, whereas a true application unto them is a principal part of their office and duty."

1. Works, III, 513.

2. Scougal, op. cit., p. 368f.

3. Works, XVI, 56.

(5) Puritan pastors were never merely satisfied to wait for their people to come them. Often, as we shall see in the next two chapters, they first went to their people.

(5) All the Puritans believed that knowledge was one of the foundation stones of the pastoral office. They held that a degree of knowledge and skill in handling cases of conscience was essential to the work of pastoral advising. They took seriously Baxter's¹ injunction: "Take heed also to yourselves, that you be not unfit for the great employments that you have undertaken."

Puritan Pastoral Psychology

Pastoral psychology is a disciplined study today, and it was not in the seventeenth century. Perhaps, it is anachronistic to call the Puritan pastoral approach to souls psychological. Yet, to a limited degree they had an understanding of human nature which is not inconsistent with the modern psychological point of view.

In their observation of human nature they made several discoveries which show they had an insight beyond their times. (1) They recognized that all people are unique in capacity and temperament. The "psychological types" of today had their counterpart in the seventeenth century. (2) They recognized the importance of environment and its effect on an individual, especially the environment of the family. (3) They identified

1. Works, XIV, 55.

2. Kemp, A Pastoral Triumph, demonstrated this fact in the case of Richard Baxter.

selfishness with sin, and saw it as the root of all evil. (4) They recognised that there was a close relationship between the body and mind. They saw sickness, which ravages the body, as the consequence of an evil mind and soul. (5) They studied and listed the causes of melancholy. Baxter, in particular, did a great deal of work in this field.¹

Their ministry to souls took account of these discoveries, and was founded upon them. Recognising that all people are unique, they realised that no one singular approach would suffice for all. Therefore, pastors were urged to minister to individuals and their individual needs, ever demonstrating an abundance of patience.² Further, they encouraged individuals to subject themselves to self-analysis, either in their diary or in private confession, that pastors might know their individual needs. Realising the importance of environment, many of the Puritans aimed their ministry, as we saw in the chapter on catechizing, at the family. Finally, their discovery of the close relationship between body and mind led to a primitive practice of what today is called psycho-somatic medicine. Many pastors doubled as physicians and were often consulted, especially in cases of melancholy, in the dual capacity of pastor-physician.³

We turn our attention now from the principles and psychology of Puritan pastoral advising to the Christian conferences in which this advising took place.

1. See, especially, the section of letters to the melancholy in Chapter VII and his sermon, (The Cure of Melancholy and Overmuch Sorrow, By Faith and Physic) Works, XVII, 236-290.
2. Cf. Baxter, Works, XIV, 180, and Owen, Works, XVI, 87.
3. See the letter from F. Fullerwood to Baxter in the section on letters to the melancholy in Chapter VII.

Private Conferences

Puritan pastors consulted privately with their people in three different types of meetings: confession, visitation of the sick and counselling sessions.

Confession

As we saw in a previous chapter, Puritanism recognized that the normal and ultimate judge of conduct was the individual conscience. This swing away from any finally authoritative tribunal, whether an ecclesiastical court or the confessional, led to a re-examination and re-interpretation of the Biblical injunction, "Confess your faults one to another...."¹ At once they found fault with the confessional. Their lofty doctrine of conscience could not be reconciled to an institution which inevitably lowered the prestige and limited the authority of the individual conscience. They condemned without question the Roman system of obligatory confession. Edward Reyner² comments:

As for Auricular Confession which the Papists hold absolutely necessary, scil. for every one to confess all his sins, withall the circumstances of them, in the ear of a Priest, once a year at least, is a meer invention or designe for politick ends, scil. to know the secrets of others, to keep them in awe, and to inslave the souls, consciences, and devotions of the people to their interests.

But they do not condemn confession altogether. They saw value in a consultative confessional which offered comfort, forgiveness, guidance and direction, but which did not presume to guarantee absolution. There were three types of Puritan confessionals: secret, private and public. We are primarily concerned here with the

1. James 5:16.

2. Rules for the Government of the Tongue (1658 edn.), p. 115f.

middle type, but all three shall be mentioned.

Haller¹ writes of the first type: "The diary like the autobiography, of which it was the forerunner, was the Puritan confessional. In its pages he could fling upon his God the fear and weakness he found in his heart but would not betray to the world." Samuel Ward while still a student at Cambridge regularly turned to his secret confessional, his diary, and there flailed himself with stinging rebukes, which were no less painful than the medieval penitent's whip. Let one day speak for itself:²

May 11, 1595 Thy dulness in the morning in prayer. Thy little affection in hearing Mr Chattertons good sermon upon the 34 verse of the 25 of Math. Thy adulterous thoughts that day. Thy backwardness in calling to minde the sermon that day. Thy backwardnes in exhorting S/ir/ S/harp/, nevertheless the good motions of Godes spiritt in thy mynd. Thy anger against M/r/ N/ewhouse/ for his long prayers.

A further extract, this time from the diary of Lady Margaret Hoby,³ indicates just what place this "privat examination" filled in daily lives:

After I had privatly praied I took my medeson and after walked: when I came home, I read of the bible, wrough, and after dined: then I dispatched som works and so went about the house, taking order for divers thinges, and, at my time, went to privat examination and praler: after, to supper, then to the lecture and, when I had praied, I went to bed.

This regular practice of confiding to one's diary made it easier, in times of particular stress and inner conflict, to confess to another.

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1. Rise of Puritanism, p. 38.
 2. Knappen, Two Puritan Diaries, p. 103.
 3. Meads, Diary of Lady Margaret Hoby, p. 120.

Private confession, both to God and man, was urged by all Puritans. "In the troubles of conscience", wrote Perkins, "it is meete and convenient, there should alwaies be used a private confession", His argument is founded on James 5:16 and became the accepted interpretation of his successors. Sibbes² states: "confession here is made to God, and to God only....But in some cases there may be...private confession to men". Manton³ agrees: "there is a season of confessing our sins, not only to God, but to man". In A Christian Directory,⁴ Baxter has an entire chapter devoted to "Cases and Directions about Confessing Sins and Injuries to others". This is his advice: "When a well-informed conscience telleth you that confession is your duty, let not self-respect detain you from it, but do it whatever it may cost you. Be true to conscience, and do not willfully put off your duty". The Confession of Faith⁵ laid down this rubric:

As every man is bound to make private Confession of his Sins to God, praying for the Pardon thereof; upon which, and the forsaking of them, he shall find Mercy: so he, that scandalizeth his Brother or the Church of Christ, ought to be willing, by a private or publick Confession and Sorrow for his Sin, to declare his Repentance to those that are offended, who are thereupon to be reconciled to him, and in love to receive him.

All were agreed that "though confession may be made to any kinde of man ('Confess one to another', saith James), yet is it especially to be bee made to the Prophets and Ministers of the Gospel".⁶ Provided, of course, that such men were "able and willing to keep secret things that are revealed, yea to bury them,

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1. Works, II, 3f.
 2. Works, II, 261.
 3. Works, IV, 458
 4. Works, VI, 509f.
 5. The Confession of Faith etc., Chap. XV, Sect. IV, p.83
 6. Sibbes, Works, II, 261

as it were, in the grave of oblivions, for 'love covereth a multitude of sins'¹". Ministers were considered the best confessors, not only because they were the most trust worthy, but also because they were the best able to effect a cure. "The physician must know the disease"², states Perkins, "before he can apply the remedy; and the grief of the heart will not be discovered unless it be manifested by the confession of the party diseased." Private confession to the pastor was necessary, also, if he was rightly to conduct public worship. Perkins³ continues: "if the minister bee to confesse his peoples sinnes, and therefore must needs know them; then it followeth also that they must discover and confesse them unto him." In their role of confessor, ministers were charged to exercise "that Law of Justice and equity, of doing to others what they would have others to do to them," continually keeping in mind their own weaknesses and the realization "that they also may be tempted, troubled and exercised so as we are."⁴ Although normally Christians were directed to confess to "a godly minister" or "a wise Christian," in certain instances they were urged to confess to others, such as "a wronged neighbour" or "those to whom we have consented in sinning, as in adultery, theft, etc."⁵

The danger of private confession becoming too much like its Roman counterpart or degenerating into mere scrupulosity was guarded against by these two reservations. First, it was held that "confession to men is necessary only in some cases."⁶ "Men go not to

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1. Loc. cit.,
 2. Works, II, 4.
 3. Ibid., III, 446
 4. Reyner, op.cit., p.127.
 5. Manton, Works IV, 460
 6. Clarke, Medulla Theologiae, p. 393

the surgeon", wrote Sibbes, "as the papists would have it, for every little prick of their finger." Only when confession to God failed to produce peace of conscience or where the wronged had not been satisfied was confession demanded. Secondly, confession of every sin was not required, "but only of the scruple itself."² That is, confession was to be a redemptive act, not a punitive one, its aim was to relieve the conscience, not burden it. Men were urged to confess that which troubled them in order that they might be resolved.³ Baxter set forth four rules "which may move you to confess your sins to another:"

1. When another hath sinned with you, or persuaded or drawn you to it, and must be brought to repentance with you.
2. When your conscience hath in vain tried all other fit means for peace and comfort, and cannot obtain it, and there is any probability of such advice from others as may procure it.
3. When you have need of advice to resolve your conscience, whether it be sin or not, or of what degree, or what you are obliged to in order to forgiveness.
4. When you have need of counsel to prevent the sin for the time to come, and mortify the habit of it.

There were certain instances, however, when private confession was not considered enough of a mark of true repentance. "A Public confession also before the Church," wrote Ames,⁴ "is necessary after the commission of a sinne publicly scandalous." This trend toward public confession was bound up with the increased interest in ecclesiastical discipline which seemed to dominate the Puritans of the Commonwealth days and later. Every member of a congregation made at least one public confession in his life time. It was prerequisite to entrance and admission in the church. In Samuel

1. Works, II, 261

2. Perkins, Works, II, 4.

3. Works, VI, 509

4. Conscience with the Power and Cases Thereof Bk. I, 37.

Clarke's congregation only those "having formerly committed gross¹ sin" acknowledged their "sinful courses, and godly sorrow for them". At St. Paul's, Covent Garden, Dr. Manton subjected everyone to a public confession, "in which they did solemnly disclaim the impurities of their former life, professing to walk suitably to² their new engagement for time to come". In most instances this was the only public confession ever made by the saints, but occasionally a second or third was required. The rule was: "After admission to ordinances, and fellowship in the Church of Christ, those that give offence (by walking disorderly)...ought to confess their faults to the whole society (or to the persons in it to whom the same is known)³...that those who know their sin, may know their sorrow also". As in private confession, so also in public, only certain sins were to be confessed.⁴ Reyner permits the concealing of "bosom sinnes", such as "hard thoughts, evil surmising, causeless jealousies, revengeful desires or rejoycings", and "sinnes actually committed, but secretly, so as they are not known unto men", when "Providence covers them" and "Conscience is quiet". But confession of "open faults" was always required, because "those scandalous acts, being faults against the church, cannot be remitted by the minister alone".⁵

Visitation of the Sick

"Another part of our oversight", writes Baxter, "lieth in Visiting the Sick, and helping them to prepare either for a fruitful life, or a happy death".⁶ "The Faithful Minister" was described

1. Clarke, op.cit., p.392
 2. Works, IV, 458
 3. Reyner, op.cit., p.117.

4. Ibid., p.120
 5. Manton, Works, IV, 459
 6. Works, XIV, 101

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by Fuller as one who "to sick folks comes sometimes before he is sent for, as counting his vocation a sufficient calling". Philip Henry was just such a faithful pastor: "He was very industrious in visiting the Sick, instructing them, and praying with them; and in this, he would say, he aimed at the good, not only of those that were Sick, but also of their Friends and Relatives that were about them".²

In the regular visiting of the sick in his congregation, the Puritan pastor sought to accomplish three things. The first was Christian instruction. The Directory³ states:

He [the pastor] may, from the Consideration of the present Sickness, instruct him out of Scripture, that Diseases come not by chance, or by Distempers of Body only, but by the wise and orderly Guidance of the good Hand of God to every particular person smitten by them. And that whether it be laid upon him out of displeasure for Sin, for his Correction and Amendment, or for Trial and Exercise of his Graces, or for other special and excellent Ends, all his Sufferings shall turn to his profit, and work together for his good, if he sincerely labour to make a sanctified Use of God's Visitation, neither despising his chastening, nor waxing weary of his Correction.

In the next chapter, we shall see how this was also accomplished by pastoral letter writing, particularly in the letters of Raul Baynes. Secondly, the pastor often used the opportunity provided by illness to apply God's mercy. One of the Cripple-gate lecturers urged: "God doth indefinitely tender his mercy to all, and we must not limit where God limits not; Ministers may safely

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1. The Holy State, Bk.II, 77.
 2. Matthew Henry, An Account of the Life and Death of Mr. Philip Henry, p.55
 3. The Confession of Faith, etc., p.460.

1
follow God's example". Finally, pastors never discounted the possibility of sick-bed repentance and constantly aimed at conversion.

2
The instruction of the Directory is:

Endeavours ought to be used to convince him of his Sins, of the Guilt and Desert of them, of the Faith and Pollution which the Soul contracts by them, and of the Curse of the Law and Wrath of God due to them; that he may be truly affected with, and humbled for them; and withal to make known the Danger of deferring Repentance, and of Salvation at any time offered, to awaken the Conscience, and to rouse him out of a stupid and secure condition, to apprehend the Justice and Wrath of God, before whom none can stand, but that he being lost in himself, layeth hold upon Christ by Faith.

3
The practical methods suggested by the Directory for accomplishing these ends are: (1) examine the ignorant in the principles of religion; (2) exhort the sick person to self-examination; (3) satisfy any scruple, doubt or temptation perplexing the sick person; and (4) pray with him. In terms of technique, Baxter recommends two important principles:

4
(1) Stay not till strength and understanding be gone, and the time so short that you scarcely know what you do; but go as soon as you hear that they are sick, whether they send for you or not. (2) When the time is so short, that there is no opportunity to endeavour the change of their hearts in that distinct way, as is usual with others, nor to press truths upon them in such order, and stay the working of it by degrees, we must therefore be sure to ply the main, and dwell upon these truths which must do the great work.

5
The psychology of their ministry to the sick is conveniently set forth in a Cripple-gate sermon. The preacher's words show that he was a good observer of human nature and that he had more than a layman's knowledge of medicine. His six principles are:

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1. (Matthew Poole, Sermon 6), The Morning Exercises at Cripple-gate, p.120.
 2. The Confession of Faith, etc., p.461
 3. Ibid., pp.460-462
 4. Works, XIV, 103
 5. Poole, op.cit., pp.121-126

(1) "Endeavour must be used to understand the state of the sick person". (2) "The great business is to bring the sick-man to a true sight of his state and condition". (3) "The same methods are not to be used to all sick persons...discreet Physitians diversifie their applications, according to the difference of the Patients disposition and condition". In his prognosis, the spiritual physician is to pay close attention to the individual's temper, education and condition, and feelings of guilt. (4) "It is a very bad guide to follow the counsels or desires of sick persons, or their carnal friends". (5) "The greatest care must be to keep sick persons from those errors whereby such persons commonly miscarry". The main ones are: insensibleness to the danger of hell; willingness to be deluded by false comfort; carelessness and listlessness toward the things of God; resting in general virtues and ignoring particular sins; and the concealment of wickedness, a sign of unfaithfulness to the self. (6) "Labour more to work a solid, than a sudden cure".

Counselling

The Puritans insisted upon the importance of private counselling or advising. Rogers¹ urged pastors to have "a willing and reade minde in them, to satisfie them privately by conference, who should resort to them upon speciall need and occasion, to comfort them in their heavinesse, and to stirre them up to religious and godly communication in their meetings privately". The biographers

1. Seven Treatises, p.32.

of the period record that many were diligent and particularly skilled in pastoral advising. Unfortunately, no pastor wrote out his experience in dealing directly with people or recorded an interview. The few examples which follow are nothing like case reports, but only fleeting references to past counselling situations. They provide, nevertheless, an idea as to what constituted seventeenth century pastoral advising, its techniques and aims.

The first case concerns a woman described by Richard Rogers¹ as "more hardened against god then I have seen any". The pastor had little success in his conversations with the woman, for "she was not troubled with anythinge which was spoken to her". But he observed her closely and noted that she frequently attempted "to hurt her selfe". Instead of condemning this suicidal tendency he identified himself with her and her needs. His therapy was simple but extremely helpful: "The time I spent carefully with her".

Roger's approach in a second case recorded in his diary is not so laudable.² He was asked by a godly neighbour to visit a not so godly friend. The man's demeanor was so objectionable that the interview left Rogers feeling "very heavy and dull". Instead of returning a second time, the pastor determined to avoid the man and confided to his diary that he was "thankfull for not beinge tyed to attende or to have much to doe with suche".

A third case concerns a woman "so sadly assaulted with Tenta-³tions that she often attempted to make away her self". The pastor John Dod, like Rogers, spent some time with the woman; but

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1. Knappen, op.cit., p.63
 2. Knappen, op.cit., p.63
 3. Clarke, The General Martyrologie, ii, 170.

his "Councels, Exhortations, and Prayers" were more effective than Rogers had been. Clarke records: "she did not only recover out of her anguish of spirit, but she was afterwards taken notice of her singular Piety". What is quite obvious in this situation is that Dod, though not ignoring it altogether, passed over her suicidal tendencies and ministered to her more basic problem - the trouble of her soul. Having effected a cure at this level, as evidenced by "her singular Piety", it was a comparatively simple matter to cure "her anguish of spirit". In Christ, Dod provided her with a reason for living, and she no longer saw one for dying.

The fourth case is about "a Gentleman related to a noble Family", who was "so perplexed in his mind" that "he hath been known in hard frosts to go bare footed, that the pain of his feet might divert his thoughts"¹. Again, John Dod was called "to heal him", but no account is given of his therapy or the cure. But the very fact that he was consulted suggests that he had been successful with similar cases.

The final case concerns a certain Margaret Dale who was brought to Henry Newcome "in deep distress, occasioned by melancholy"². He quickly diagnosed the difficulty when he found that she had been "crossed in her desires of marriage with Richard Pointin". After consultation with two other ministers the pastor recommended that she should marry Pointin. The effect of this was almost instantaneous cure of her melancholy: "the Lord made it a means of settling her, and it was the mercy of God to continue his affections to her, notwithstanding her seeming uselessness".

1. Ibid., 11, 172.

2. The Autobiography of Henry Newcome, ed. Richard Parkinson, (Chetham Society) I, 49.

It is difficult to draw even a few tentative conclusions from such scanty materials, but several things stand out. The ultimate aim in these several interviews was to remove whatever stood in the way of peace of mind and conscience. This involved in each situation a recognition of the parishioner's basic problem or need. It also involved on the part of the pastor a real respect for his parishioner, which only obstinate and willful continuing in sin could obliterate.

The closest thing approximating a recorded pastoral interview is Edmund Staunton's "A Dialogue: or, a Discourse between a Minister and a Stranger, as they were on the High-way together, about Soul Affairs" (1673). This work is by no means unique, but is representative of many of its kind. It is not an actual recorded pastoral counselling interview, but is suggestive of what many of them must have been like.

It is conducted by a question and answer method similar to catechizing. The pastor begins by asking his companion about such general things as the soul, God, the Ten Commandments, sin, hell, virtue, salvation, Christ and conversion. Then, he becomes more specific relating these questions to the other's life and personal habits, his keeping of the Sabbath, his relationship to his neighbours and the world, and his conduct before God. After each answer to his question the pastor goes on to expound and elucidate the answer.

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1. Richard Mayo, The Life and Death of Edmund Staunton, to which is added I. His Treatise of Christian Conference; II. His Dialogue betwixt a Minister and a Stranger.
 2. Cf., e.g., Arthur Dent, The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven.

Several points of the dialogue are worth emphasizing. First, the minister's role was considered by both men as that of a counsellor. On several occasions the "stranger" breaks into the dialogue to commend the minister's "counsel" and to assure him of his intention to follow it. Secondly, the counsel is always Scriptural. One sequence reads:

"Stranger. Sir, you bring so much Scripture, that I cannot tell what to say to you. Min. Friend, its the Word of God by which we must be tryed and judged another day, Rom.2,16. 'In the day (of Judgment) when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel' (saith the Apostle;) and 'therefore we might do well to try and judge our selves by it now.' 1

Thirdly, the pastor successfully handles the other's hostilities resulting from the continual probing of his past. This is accomplished by avoiding both a censorious attitude, on the one hand, and a patronizing one, on the other. The "stranger" accepts the pastor's premise: "Friend, I speak in love to you, desiring (if the Lord please) to do some good to your soul;" ² and replies: "Sir, it's my fault to be angry; but you do so pinch me: yet I am persuaded you mean me no hurt; therefore if you'll needs have my heart out of me, it's even no better nor no worse." Fourthly, by successive stages, the desired end of pastoral care is accomplished. The "stranger" first confesses: "I see then when all is done, I must mend my life, and become a new man." ³ He next demonstrates that he has gained an insight into the meaning of affliction as well as of himself: "Sir, I hope I am truly humbled for my sins, I grieve and am sorry for them, I have had many afflictions, and smarted for

1. p. 108.
2. p. 127.
3. p. 122.

my sins." Then, he shows that the interview was really successful in terms of his Christian education: "Sir, I never understood so much before".² Fifthly, the pastor does not break off the interview until after giving some concrete counsel that can be taken away, considered and applied.³ He advises:

1. To make Conscience of secret Prayer...to be earnest with God to give you knowledge...
2. As also, for repentance from dead Works, and a true saving faith in Jesus Christ.
3. Be much in searching the Scriptures, and reading of good Books, catechisms, and such like.
4. Make choice of good Company, of such as fear God, and walk precisely, holily, righteously, and soberly in this present evil world...
5. Be sure if you have a Family, to set up the worship of God in your Family, reading the Scriptures, and praying morning and evening with the household, Catechizing, and instructing your Children and Servants, if you have any.
6. And lastly, be strict in sanctifying the Sabbath, spend that day well, though the rest of the Neighbours be loose and careless therein...

Finally, the pastor, in terminating the interview, leaves the door open for future conversations.⁴ The dialogue concludes:

And now Friend, fare you well and the Lord bless you.
Stranger. And you also, good Sir, I hope I shall remember you, and some of your words to me as long as I live; onely let me desire one favour of you, that I may know your name, and where you live.

Minister. That you shall Friend, my name is so and so, and I live at such a place, and if your occasions call you thither, I shall be glad to see you; and let me know your name, and where you live, and possibly if I come that way, I may see you. Once more farewell.

1. p. 150.
2. p. 150.
3. pp. 150-152.
4. p. 152.

Public Conferences

Public conferences were group meetings of Christians for the furtherance of Biblical truth. Ambrose¹ sums up all that is involved in such meetings in this way:

Would Christians thus meet and exchange words and notions, they might build up one another, they might hear and inflame one another, they might strengthen and encourage one another, as the brethren did Paul, I Thess. v.11. And have we not an express command for this duty of conscience? 'Thus shall ye say every one to his brother, and every one to his neighbour, What hath the Lord answered? And what hath he spoken? Jer.xxiii.35.

The two types of conferences discussed here are church conferences and group conferences.

Church Conferences

"Propheesyings" is the term often applied to these meetings in church between the minister and the congregation. Robert Baillie² gives the Brownists the credit for devising this method of public religious education. He writes: "wherein, by way of conference, questioning and disputations, every one of the Congregation may propound publikely, and presse their Scruples, Doubts and Objections against anything which that day they have heard". Bernard³, in his catechism, indicates that the practice soon became wide-spread throughout all Puritanism. According to him, it was a time for "asking superiours and Ministers, for reasoning with equals, and teaching inferiours, all in reverance and humility, to understand that I know not, to be resolved in that I doubt of, and to call to memorie what I have forgotten". Isaac Ambrose

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1. (Prima, Media, &Ultima), Works, p.112.
 2. A Dissuasive from the Errours of the Time, p.80.
 3. A larger Catechism.

and Edmund Staunton, as well as a host of diarists, testify to its repeated practice among the later Puritans.

Edmund Staunton is the only Puritan to have written an entire treatise on the subject, A Treatise of Christian Conference¹ (1673). His work is therefore particularly valuable. It has been reserved for discussion until now because he treats mainly of public conferences. This book is especially helpful in focussing attention upon the benefits, preparations and directions for conducting this work, which were held important by most pastors.

After discussing conversation in general, Staunton turns to the subject of Christian conference stressing first its benefits, which are: "the enlightening of the ignorant, the reducing the erronious, and the converting of stout-hearted sinners,... the strengthening of the feeble-minded, and confronting of such as are cast down"². These benefits occur when the saints meet to discuss cases of conscience and the trials of their faith.³ Such discussions can never be spontaneous, however, they need to be preceded by preparation. Staunton suggests that the best preparation is to live a holy life and "to get and hold fast a form of sound words in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus, II Tim. 1:13". The study of divinity is particularly urged in order that one might be "well stockt and furnished with special matter of discourse, for special occasions"⁴. As to the actual conduct of conferences,⁵ Staunton sets down five general directions: (1) Begin at home.⁶ (2) Avoid becoming impassioned or proud. (3) Let

1. Mayo, op.cit.,
2. p. 76.
3. p. 110.

4. p.133
5. p.139
6. pp. 145-148

spiritual conversation be a natural outgrowth of common.¹ (4) Let your speech be both mirthful and pleasant in order that your conversation be more profitable.² (5) Use the acts of Providence³ to initiate your spiritual conversation.

Church conferences were held on an appointed day, but not usually on Sunday, since that was the day for worship and catechizing. In Ambrose's congregation it was decided "that every Wednesday, especially during winter, we will meet for conference about soul-affairs".⁴ To better conduct these weekly meetings, the congregation formulated a set of rules and procedures:⁵

- (1) That if any difference in opinion shall arise amongst us, we will fully debate, and then submit to the judgment of the society, as it shall be made good out of the word.
- (2) If we observe any of the society to fall into any sin or scandal...then he be excluded, till he repent, and be voted for his admission again.
- (3) That whatsoever is spoken amongst us (the telling whereof may tend to the prejudice of any one of us) shall be kept secret, upon pain of undergoing such censure as the major part of the company shall think fit.
- (4) That for admission of any into our society, we will not be too strict nor too large....And by this rule, those that are to be admitted shall be voted by the major part of us.
- (5) That, for better regulating of this society, we will have a moderator: and what further orders we or any of us shall hereafter think upon, we shall propound the same to our society at our next meeting; and the same shall be confirmed or annulled, as it shall be agreed by the major vote of our society.
- (6) That the moderator shall propound the question and matter of our discourse the week before it be discussed; and at every meeting, begin with prayer, and end with thanksgiving.

The subject matter normally discussed at these meetings was selected from four sources: the previous week's sermon, choice

1. p. 148 f.
2. p. 150ff.
3. p. 182ff.

4. Works, p.112.
5. Loc.cit.

heads of divinity, cases of conscience and controverted points. As we shall notice shortly, the sermon was more often discussed in smaller groups than in these larger ones. ¹ Staunton lists these heads of divinity as worthy of being discussed:

1. Concerning God, his Titles, Names Attributes, works of Creation and Providence. Or, 2. Concerning sin, its heinous nature, how it and nothing else is abominable to God, and destructive to man. Or, 3. touching death, how all must die, none knoweth how soon. Or, 4. concerning Christ. 5. As also concerning hell, the pains and torments of the damned, endless, easiless, and remedy less....

² Philip Henry includes in his diary a list of divinity questions proposed weekly to his congregation:

1665

- January 8. The Question was, what are good Argum.against Sin?
 Feb.4. Q. How far a man may goe towards Heaven and yet fall short.
 Feb.11. Q. What are the common Hinderances of mens Salvation?
 Feb.18. Q. What are y^e Ingredients of true repentance?
 Feb.25. Q. What motives to Repentance? t
 Mar. 4. Q. What is it to believe in J..X for salvation.
 Mar.11. Q. What is required to an acceptable good work?
 Mar.18. Q. What evidence of love to God.
 Mar.25. Q. How to express love to our neighbour?

Cases of conscience were the most frequently discussed matter.

³ Ambrose lists ten handled by his congregation. They cover a wide range from prayer and the true signs of grace, to afflictions and doubt. The fourth category of "controverted points" generally treated of questions, either of divinity or of conscience, which were not readily answerable, or whose answers were not always applicable to all people in every circumstance.

The practical procedure followed in these church conferences was apparently on this order. The week before, a subject or

1. Staunton, op.cit., p.127f.
2. Diaries and Letters, p. 160
3. Works, p.115f.

question be discussed at the succeeding meeting, was handed out. Each member of the society then studied the question on his own and discussed it with his family. The resources for this were the Bible and any manuals on cases of conscience which individuals possessed. At the following meeting, the question or questions were proposed by the moderator. As many as felt inclined suggested an answer. All differences of opinion were resolved by appealing to the Scriptures and by a vote. When it was apparent that two prevalent opinions were equally true, they were both registered. Finally, conclusions of a practical nature were drawn by the pastor or moderator and applied by each individual. A record of these discussions were retained, sometimes in the official church minutes, sometimes elsewhere, in order that anyone might refer back to a question or answer when they were in need of such help.

Group Conferences

Puritan pastors, in small informal groups, successfully practiced a ministry which today would be called group therapy. The types of conferences used are as infinite ~~in~~ variety as the pastors who conducted them. Yet, despite their differences, both in character and setting, they all aimed at the same end - to help people who were troubled or disturbed in conscience. By looking more closely at several of these group meetings, we shall be able to form a better appreciation of this phase of the Puritan ministry.

William Perkins began his ministry as a remarkable mission to the prisoners of Cambridge Castle. "He prevailed with the jailor",

writes Clarke,¹ "to bring the prisoners (fettered as they were) to the Shire-house, hard by the prison, where he preached every Lord's day to them". Fuller's account,² from which Clarke borrowed, adds: "Thus was the prison his parish, his own Charity his Patron presenting him unto it, and his works was all his wages". His success in this work was immediate and real. Fuller concludes: "Many an Onesimus here he begot, and as the instrument freed the prisoners from the captivity of sinne". This extraordinary ministry was conducted two hundred years before Parliament made the appointment of prison chaplains compulsory,³ and it is surely a mile stone along the road of compassionate caring for the imprisoned.

One of the most unusual of group meetings were those held twice weekly by John Dod.⁴ After the Sunday morning service and again after the Wednesday lecture, he would invite between eight and a dozen persons to dine with him. If his wife ever doubted whether she had enough food to feed them all, he would invariably reply: "Better want meat than good company....This is not a day to feast the bodies but souls". While the rest ate, "he spent the time amongst them in spiritual exhortation and conference". On Sundays, he continued this meeting after the second service. He would begin this session by asking, "if any have a good question, or a hard place of Scripture to open, let them say on". His biographer engagingly records that he would talk until faint, and then "call for a small glass of Wine and Beer mixt", and "then to it again till night".

1. A General Martyrologie, ii, 397.

2. The Holy State, p.81.

3. Cf. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. X, "Prisons"

4. Clarke, op.cit., ii. 169-177

Baxter's Thursday evening meetings are as famous now as they were popular then. Unfortunately, they are given only scant notice in the Reliquiae,¹ but enough is said to indicate the character of the conference:

Every Thursday Evening my Neighbours that were most desirous and had Opportunity, met at my House, and there one of them repeated the Sermon, and afterwards they proposed what Doubts any of them had about the Sermon, or any other Case of Conscience, and I resolved their Doubts: And last of all I caused sometimes one, and sometimes another of them to Pray (to exercise them); and sometimes I prayed with them my self: which (besides singing a Psalm) was all they did.

What is not so well known, is that Baxter also conducted a similar type of meeting for his young people: "And once a Week also some of the younger sort who were not fit to pray in so great an assembly, met among a few more privately, where they spent three Hours in Prayer together, every Saturday Night they met at some of their Houses to repeat the Sermon of the last Lord's Day, and to pray and prepare themselves for the following Day".² Baxter's meetings aimed at instructing and resolving the conscience. Although his ministry was normally person centered, for the sake of convenience and in the sure and certain knowledge that the Spirit operates within the fellowship, he widened the sphere of his personal advising to the group level, but, as in every other instance of his ministry, he spoke man to man.

³ Philip Henry, following the example of the Apostles⁴, "kept up a monthly conference in private from house to house, in which he met with the more knowing and judicious of the Parish, and they

1. R.B., i, 83

2. Loc.cit.

3. Matthew Henry, op.cit., p.54f.

4. Acts 5:42, 20:20.

discoursed familiarly together of the things of God, to their mutual¹ Edification". In his diary, under the year 1665, Henry mentions several questions used in just such a Saturday evening family conference. The questions are all followed by Scriptural answers and we may infer that these family meetings were not dissimilar from catechizing exercises.

Small, informal discussion groups, like Baxter's and Henry's, appear to have been most popular.² Heywood records that he frequently took part in just such meetings. He mentions that on one occasion he spoke extemporaneously on the theme "the redeeming of time", and on another, he spoke on the subject of "original sin".

At about the time that Baxter was meeting with his people on Thursday evenings, John Owen was conducting his Scruple Shop at Oxford.³ What this really was is now a mystery. It is mentioned by Mallet⁴ as "the weekly conference which they ³ [a committee for regulating the University] established every Thursday at a house beside the Saracen's Head", and which was "irreverently termed the Scruple Shop". He writes that it "drew doubters and serious-minded men of all opinions", and "evidently met with some success".⁵ Bishop Heber dates it slightly later, "during the time that the celebrated Dr. Owen was dean of Christ Church". "How long it continued, or what were the members that resorted to it", he adds, "I am not informed". He concludes: "It possibly was of the

1. Diaries and Letters, pl60.

2. Hunter, The Rise of the Old Dissent, p. 209f.

3. I had interviews with librarians in both the Bodleian and Christ Church libraries and neither group could shed any light on this.

4. Charles Edward Mallet, A History of the University of Oxford, II, 370.

5. The Whole Works of Jeremy Taylor, I, cclxx.

shorter duration from the ludicrous name of 'scruple-shop', which was given it by the younger students". It is easier to say what it was not than what it was. It was not, for instance, the Sunday afternoon preaching services conducted alternately by Owen and Thomas Goodwin. There are frequent references to them, but the term "scruple shop" is never applied. It does not seem likely either that it was just another religious conference. Philip Henry,¹ who attended the university at this time, in recording "with thankfulness to God, the great advantages he had in the University, not only the Learning but for Religion and Piety", mentions regular meeting together for "Christian Conference", but he never states that these meetings were irreverently called 'the scruple shop.' Probably the only thing that one can say with certainty is that it was a "scruple shop", a place where young students obtained resolution of their doubts, intellectual and spiritual, conducted primarily, but not exclusively, by the teacher with a pastor's heart, John Owen.

Summary

Puritan pastors advised and counselled their people in special meetings called Christian conferences. They were of both a private and public nature, but the Pastor's role was the same in both. He attempted, through the conversation of these meetings, to apply the counsel of God to specific situations. His role was that of a prophet, and the conferences were always pastor centered. The success which many enjoyed in this work was directly related to their knowledge of human behaviour and psychology, and the way in which

1. Matthew Henry, op. cit., p. 28.

they applied this knowledge, along with Scriptural truth, to particular individuals and their needs. Ideally, pastors sought to deal with individuals, and even when these conferences were of a group character, they spoke man to man.

CHAPTER VI

THE PASTORAL LETTER

Introduction

Ever since, and even long before, Paul's pastoral letters, private counselling by letter has been a regular practice of spiritual physicians.¹ The Puritans were no exception. They were part of the great tradition immediately received from Luther and Calvin and passed on to Doddridge, Watts and John Wesley. Unfortunately, much of what they wrote is now lost. Enough remains, however, - though scattered through manuscript volumes, in published editions, and among printed collections - to allow some evaluation of this phase of their ministry. This chapter, and the succeeding one, seeks to focus attention on the letters of a representative few, in order to indicate the quality and value of their work.

The study of these letters, especially those in manuscript form, was not without difficulty. They are not always legible or even discipherable being, in many cases, hastily written; often crowded on small sheets of paper; filled with abbreviations; subject to errors in spelling and grammar; abused by time; and, as is the case with many of Baxter's letters, second copies. Nor is all that was written and now appearing, either in manuscript or printed form, worth transcribing or even reading. On the other hand, there is much in the letters which is erudite and of

1. McNeill, "Personal Counselling in Early Protestantism", Christendom, Vol. VI, pp.364-375, traces the practice back to the Stoics.

consequence; the study of which was a comparatively grateful labour, tempting one to quote at length. This being impossible, the writer has contented himself, here and there, with a brief summary or the quotation of a few salient sentences.

Posting Problems in the Seventeenth Century

Before turning to the letter writers themselves, a moment's pause to take note of some of the difficulties encountered in using the seventeenth century postal services may well prove helpful to the reader.

Despite the early origin of postal services, the postal system was still in its infancy during this century. For one thing, the collection and delivery of letters was very irregular. The dilemma of two men, one having hastily to dash off a note because "the carrier doth stay for my Letter",¹ and the other prohibited from replying at all because "our carrier goeth not",² was multiplied innumerable times.

The indiscretion and dishonesty of some of the carriers posed another problem. John Davenport³ confesses to Lady Vere: "Upon my recovery, I wayted for a convenient messenger, accounting it unsafe to wright by y^e post, least my letters should be opened by others, as some formerly have."⁴ Some postmen were so unscrupulous as to accept payment for delivery and then allow the letters to miscarry. One solution to this prevalent danger was suggested by a correspondent of Richard Baxter. "I entreat you," he

1. MSS Sloan 922, f.60.

2. Paul Baynes, Christian Letters (1620 edn.,) p.31.

3. MSS Birch, 4275, f.167.

4. Private letter carriers were expressly forbidden by successive acts of Elizabeth and James I, c.f. Encyclopaedia Britannica (1959 edn.,) Vol.18, "Postal Services".

writes, "to direct y^e next letter to be left with the Post-Master in Dartmouth, & that you would not pay the post, that may occasion the letter to be miscarried or rather thrown aside: for that reason I have made bold to put you to the charge of paying y^e ¹ postage of mine".

The lack of house-to-house delivery presented still another difficulty, namely - where to direct one's letter. It appears, from an examination of the correspondence of the period, that post masters, inn keepers and book sellers were the most frequent receivers. One presumes that they, in turn, retained the missive until rightly claimed; which meant, in many cases, an undue delay in keeping up a correspondence.

Bearing these difficulties in mind, we turn to the first of our representative letter writers, Paul Baynes.

An Early Pastoral Letter Writer: Paul Baynes, d.1617.

Baynes, as the reader will remember, was successor to William Perkins as lecturer at Great St. Andrew's Church, Cambridge. Three contemporary evaluations of the man and his ² ministry are worth noting at the outset. Fuller lists him among the learned writers having attended Christ College. ³ Sibbes, who owes his conversion to him, describes Baynes as "a man of much communion with God, and acquaintance with his own heart, observing the daily passages of his life, and

1. MSS.Baxter, I, 15.

2. History of Cambridge, p.92.

3. Paul Baynes, An Entire Commentary upon the Whole Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians, Nichol's Series of Standard Divines. Puritan Period, Preface.

exercised much with spiritual conflicts". Samuel Clarke¹ adds: He was an excellent Casuist, and thereupon many doubting Christians repaired to him for satisfaction in cases of Conscience". It was, undoubtedly, a combination of these qualities that made his "Letters, second only to those of Samuel Rutherford...² [and] long the chosen fireside reading of every puritan household". This encomium becomes even more noteworthy when one considers that Baxter termed Rutherford's letters "the best piece...he had ever read"³.

Forty-five of the letters were first published shortly after his death⁴; the remaining ones, which were extant, were published along with the former ones in 1637. All together there are fifty-one letters⁵, but no autographs remain.

The editor's preface, signed Ez.Ch.⁶ and addressed to two ladies of nobility, contains an excellent summary of the letters contents:

I present to your view, and inscribe by particular Dedication to your Ladships, the ensuing Bundle of Letters, part of the workes of a reverend Divine...For I am perswaded ...that if you attentively reade this Booke, you shall finde many sweet Motives to heavenly-mindednesse, effectual considerations to qualifie the bitterness of sorrow, which often befalleth us in this vale of Tears; and lastly no small attractive to draw up your mindes from these vanishing delights below, to those hopes and joyes of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you.

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1. A General Martyrologie, ii, 23
 2. Alexander B. Grosart, Works of Richard Sibbes, I, xxxiv.
 3. I am indebted to Andrew Bonar, Letters of Samuel Rutherford, p.18, for this quotation.
 4. S.T.C. states that this work was entered December 20, 1619. Haller, Rise of Puritanism, lists an edition of 1618. The edition of 1620 is followed throughout this chapter.
 5. The edition of 1620 divided them into four books: Christian Letters, Holy Soliloquies, Comfort and Instruction in Affliction and The Triall of a Christian Estate.
 6. I am unable to identify Ez.Ch., unless it is Ezechiel Charke, student at Cambridge, 1603-1617. cf. Venn. Alumni Cantabrigienses. Pt. I, Vol. I, 324.

Baynes's Uses of the Pastoral Letter

The pastoral letter was a ready ally to the ever watchful physician of the soul. Sometimes, he used it to inquire into another's spiritual health even, one imagines, before that individual was ready for such inquiry. In this regard, Baynes's letter often came with alarming timeliness. To "Brother" he wrote: "Well, you should let mee heare from you, and know how you feelee your soule affected; who can fit a shooe that knoweth not the foote? How can I fit you with helpfull counsell, while you conceale from mee your daily condition?"¹ He addressed "Loving Cousin" even more reassuringly: "You know the truth of my love to you, and I know how easily I can (through God's blessing) procure that which would refresh you seasonably. Wherefore if you should not impart it to mee timely... you shall neglect a good means, which God's providence doth show you, you shall be wanting to your owne comfort."²

Baynes was particularly adept at using the letter to awaken a sense of guilt within a complacent soul. In the longest of his letters, running to over four thousand words, he counsels a housewife:³

Loving Sister, I cannot but write you a word in the love I beare you, hearing that your health doth stand more weakely with you, then heretofore. I wish your bodily frailty might be an occasion to your soule, of returning into itself, and drawing more neer to God in Christ Jesus... Finally, consider whether you have not used the lawfull things of this life temperately; whether you have not neglected time, which is so precious; whether you have not beene carelesse to see that those who are under your government, should serve and feare the Lord. Consider, I say, such like things, that you may find what it is God would have you amend.

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1. Christian Letters, p.302
 2. Ibid., p.107.
 3. Comfort and Instruction in Affliction, p. 389ff.

While to a fellow minister he writes: "Take it I beseech you, as my best love, if I prefer to your considerations some things which I take to have beene the chiefe infirmities of your soule"¹. We shall note later one of these "infirmities".

The Puritans were fond of using the language of the physician and of styling themselves, "physicians of the soul"; and so they were. Like any conscientious physician, they were never merely satisfied to diagnose illness, but were equally concerned to prescribe a cure. It is not surprising, therefore, to find the pen of our ready writer often directed toward remedial purposes. It was easy for him to write because, like Rutherford to whom he has already been compared, "the Lord was pouring on him the unction that teacheth all things." He sought through his letters to convey the Lord's teaching to his spiritual children; especially to "advertise...of some diseases which...grow upon the soule;"³ and to offer comfort to those who were afflicted.

Though many of his letters are didactic in content, only one appears to have been called forth by an inquirer's questions. The questioner desired to know "whether you may receive [the communion elements] with one who for want of skill, or will, is no preaching Minister"; and whether or not he should scruple "kneeling"⁴. The first question is answered according to true Augustinian piety, a

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1. Christian Letters, p.111.
 2. Bonar, op.cit., p.24
 3. Christian Letters, p.74
 4. Christian Letters, p. 194ff.

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hallmark of Puritan theology: "the Sacramental actions of ungifted Ministers are effectual to such as faithfully receive them". While his rejoinder to the second query reads like a sentence out of the eighth chapter of First Corinthians: "When there is no apparent scandall, you may kneele". In case the inquirer should be troubled at a later date by additional problems, Baynes offers for his help his own rule of thumb for dealing with controversial issues: "I like not surgery which upon every want dismembreth and cutteth off: nor such meddling in crazie bodies which doth utterly overwhelme them; holy quiet will heale more in these cases than vertueous motion".

2

His instructions cover a wide range, from "changing of Preachers," (which he sadly deplores) to ways for "keeping our selves unspotted from the wicked and powerlesse conversation of others".³ to "rules to know whether our hearts be set on God".⁴

A great many of his letters are addressed to sickness, not so much physical sickness (with which Luther was greatly concerned),⁵ but the diseases of the soul. Among these he mentions: "wearinesse", which is God's malady inducing us "to new reckonings within our selves;"⁶ lack of godlinesse, "which though it cannot quite choake and extinguish the life of grace, yet it hindereth that growth and thriving

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1. For a discussion of this subject, cf. Perry Miller, The New England Mind: the seventeenth century, pp.3-34.
 2. Christian Letters, p.80.
 3. Ibid., p.202
 4. Ibid., p.269
 5. cf. Luther: Letters of Spiritual Counsel, ed. Theodore G. Tappert, The Library of Christian Classics, Vol. XVIII.
 6. Christian Letters, p.46.

of it which is to be wished¹; "intemperancy", by which he doesn't mean "excessive curiosity...open gluttony...drunkenness"; but that which for the Puritans was much more odious, "the covetous following a lawfull calling²" and "the lesse holy temperate and reverent use of our lawfull liberties and repasts³"; a wandering mind⁴; and "deadness of spirit", which God hangs about us "that it may be a spur inciting us to goe forth to him..."⁵

Physical sickness, when mentioned, is treated as one of the many varieties of afflictions, a constant recurring subject. Afflictions, generally speaking, are "all evils which befall us in soule, bodie, and condition"⁶, more particularly, they are those maladies sent by God "that the soule holpen by them, as by bitter potions, might by renewed repentance more and more purge itself"⁷. This is near to the heart of Puritan theology. The Puritans knew themselves to stand continually under divine arrest, with "Famine, and Sword, and Plague"⁸ being God's three greatest afflictions, and "Sicknesseshis Sargeants"⁹.

To both spiritual sickness and physical affliction Baynes's counsel is the same. It often takes the form of personal testimony: "I desire to practice the duty of remembering the afflicted, as if

1. Ibid., p.76

2. For a discussion of the Puritan teaching concerning vocations cf. Christopher Hill, "Puritans and the Poor", Past and Present, No. 2, pp.32-50.

3. Christian Letters, p.88

4. Ibid., p.122

5. Ibid., p.56

6. Ibid., p.2

7. Loc.cit.

8. Ibid., p.265

9. Ibid., p.266

my selfe were afflicted in body"¹. More importantly, its content - an urging to repentance and "suing unto [God] with faithful and sorrowful hearts"² - is in the best New Testament tradition and in accord with Christ's own practice.³ That his guidance was compassionate and helpful to troubled seventeenth century souls is evidenced by the fact the Nehemiah Wallington, who we shall meet later, took the trouble to copy into his own little book of spiritual help five of Baynes's letters which were written to the suffering.

In the case of death, the greatest affliction, the Cambridge pastor's ministry was addressed to the surviving mourners. Though less sublime than the Apostle Paul, he was no less forceful in pointing the way to Christ, urging faith, and encouraging hope. To a woman lamenting the death of her elder brother, he writes: "Comfort your selfe in this; your best eldest Brother liveth, and is by his Spirit, with you to the end; your Lord Jesus, who is not ashamed to call us Brethern"⁴. To a couple plunged into sorrow by the untimely death of a child, he consoles: "God is the chiefe Father of all the family in heaven and earth. We are but foster parents to our owne children....They that are taken thus soone, are crowned through Christ without having experience of that fight"⁵. Such an exalted view must, and in Baynes does, depreciate grief; he abhors it as being "selfe-love, or carnal affection"⁶.

1. Ibid., p. 305.

2. Ibid., p. 266

3. Mark 2:17 "They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance".

4. Christian Letters, p.273f.

5. Ibid., p.60f.

6. Loc.cit.

Content of the Letters

It is clear, after an examination of these letters, that Baynes's counsel is simply the application of his theology to such practical problems and distresses as confronted seventeenth century folk. A thorough reading of his letters would provide one with a compendium of his theology. Let a brief summary suffice here.

He believed that all men naturally know God, but that they do not know his will; this truer knowledge is only to be found in Jesus Christ: "Therefore you must know this, that if you will seeke him, you must looke at Christ his Sonne, in whom the Father is, for they are one"¹. The source and norm of this revealed theology is Holy Scripture from which he quotes extensively in defining and illustrating his counsel. Wakefield² comments: "When Paul Baynes writes to console the bereaved, he takes them straight to Ephrah and Rachel dying in childbed, or to Moriah where Abraham was almost parted from his beloved son. The tears of the childless are those of Anna, and the afflictions of Job are a constant consolation to the struggling Christian". The providence of God is everywhere visible and all must "pray to God for grace, that we may carry our crosse, and take evill no lesse thankfully than good from his hand"³.

Alas, man's fellowship with God is broken by sin, and "the truth is, let sinne doe what it will, wee cannot hate it of our selves"⁴. Having said this, Baynes is quick to affirm that "God for his Christ's blood...hath absolved you from the guilt of all

1. Ibid., p.132.

2. Puritan Devotion, p.25

3. Christian Letters, p.241

4. Ibid., p.18.

your sinne"¹. The saints are urged, therefore, to "turn your eies from your selfe, and from your owne workes, unto the Election and calling of God. For the Lord saveth us, not because of our good workes"². Notwithstanding this emphasis upon sola fide the elect are to adopt an ascetic way, shunning "Pride, Profit, and Pleasure"³ and an inordinate love of this world; and to be constant in works of charity. In this regard, Baynes's comment to one whom he addresses as "Brother" is of interest. "I am glad you have done so kinde an office to your Sister; it shall further your owne reckoning, when you come to be accountant to God"⁴. All are strictly cautioned, though, that "not what wee doe, but how wee doe it, doth witnesse to our scoules, that wee are found Christians"⁵.

It is a curious fact that no mention is made of the Church and only a slight reference to the Spirit;⁶ despite the fact that the sacraments,⁷ resurrection,⁸ and communion of saints,⁹ are briefly touched upon. This apparent omission may well be explained by realising that Baynes was writing to those who were the Church and as one full of the Holy Spirit and thus full of Christ and testifying to him. This was "the be all and end all" of his ministry, namely - to witness to Jesus Christ.

1. Ibid., p.231

3. Ibid., p.139

2. Ibid., p.231

4. Ibid., p.213f.

3. Ibid., p.82.

Baynes tends to confirm the Weber-Tawney-Troeltsch theory: one of the Puritan characteristics was its concern with good works, seeing them as "signs" of election, but he makes no specific application of this idea to the rise of capitalism.

6. Recent scholarship, notably G. F. Nuttall's The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience, has pointed up the importance of this doctrine in Puritan thought and practice.

7. Christian Letters, p. 135, 417.

8. Ibid., p.117.

9. Ibid., p.267

Style of his Writing

Baynes's style is certainly not classical; yet, at times, his pen suggests, by a few strokes, very much that is profound and impressive. When apologising for the press of duties which dictates a letter instead of a personal visit he writes: "love must be content to creepe when shee cannot goe at liberty as she desireth"¹. To a friend whom he has neglected, he reasons: "Sir, you may thinke me a grave rather, in whom all your kindnesses are buried..."² Christians, who having put their hand to the plow look back, are described as "Boat-men, that looke one way, but row another"³. The coming of bad times to a certain "Good Master Dowson" is designated by the phrase, when "[God]" changed his right hand"⁴.

At appropriate times he was wont, also, to use familiar quotations and proverbs, e.g., "Rome was not built in a day;"⁵ "a man cannot eate his Cake and have it;"⁶ and "the slowest fire makes the sweetest malt"⁷.

A great deal of his descriptive material was chosen from the great out-of-doors for, as he points out, "nature her self is such a Schoolmistresse, that she teacheth her Creatures industry.... [and]"⁸ maketh a man incline to action". In turn, he calls upon ants, dogs, cattle and seasons, storing of hay, and shoe making,

1. Ibid., p. 108.
2. Ibid., p. 165
3. Ibid., p. 272 This same saying appears a half century later in Pilgrims Progress. It is used by "By-ends" to describe his Great Grandfather.
4. Ibid., p. 306.
5. Christian Letters, p. 170.
6. Ibid., p. 252.
7. Quoted by Alexander, Editor, Baynes's Entire Commentary upon the Whole Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians.
8. Holy Soliloquies, Preface.

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to illustrate his counsel.

One other ¹exemplary quality (only occasionally discerned) is his ability to fit advice in terms familiar to his correspondents. A defective minister, for example, is criticised as one of those "who by profession married to God, have not cared for partaking in the ministry of the Word, which is the Bridall-bed, wherein by his spirit, he doth communicate with our soules his sweetest favours"². A business man is urged: "neglect not your best Merchandize, the seeking those Pearles which will make your soule rich before God"³. To an expectant mother he offers to commend "a good Midwife", namely, "My Lady Faith, who is the Sovereigne Lady and Commandresse in all things which the just man doth, or suffereth"⁴.

In taking leave of this Cambridge pastor let us note as worthy of remembrance, his telling use of the pastoral letter, his Biblical ethic and his thoroughly Christian approach to all affliction, especially to death. These qualities, in one form or another, are to be found in all successive Puritan letter writers.

The Timeliness and the Contemporaneous Quality of the Pastoral Letter: Letters to Lady Horace Vere from seven pastors, circa 1618-1651.

We now pass from the letters of one pastor written to many souls, to those of seven pastors written to a single individual. They command attention because they illustrate, quite vividly, how the pastoral letter was able, in an age devoid of rapid communication, to make pastoral concern timely and contemporary.

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1. Baynes's interest in the world around him tends to contradict Cragg's theory: "The Puritan was not, as a rule, greatly interested in nature; he was apt to see the world as a vale of tribulation, the present scene of his testing and temptation. Certainly it had little direct religious significance". From Puritanism to the Age of Reason, p.53.
 2. Christian Letters, p.111f.
 3. Ibid., p.184.
 4. Ibid., p.243.

This second group of letters, twenty in number, are located, with one exception, in the British Museum. Ten of them, those from the pen of John Davenport, have been published; the remaining ten, four from John Dod, two from John Burgess, and one each from William Ames, Laurence Chadderton, Archbishop Usher, and Richard Eedes, have not. All twenty are addressed to Mary Vere; whose second husband, Sir Horace Vere, was one of the most distinguished of seventeenth century military leaders.

Ames and Chadderton, contemporaries of Baynes at Cambridge, are already familiar figures, having been met in an earlier chapter. "Decalogist" Dod and Archbishop Usher are equally famous seventeenth century personalities. Burgess, Davenport, and Eedes, may not be so well known. Burgess was at Cambridge (St. John's College) during Perkins's student days; but, having graduated in 1586, he was gone before most of the Cambridge Puritans had entered. He is best remembered by his contemporaries for his offensive sermon preached before newly crowned James I (which landed him in the Tower). He is also remembered, though, as a renowned Doctor of Physic; and it was while engaged in this practice and, at the same time, incumbent of Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire, that he came in contact with the Veres. So pleased with

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1. The one exception, a letter from John Davenport, is located in the Public Record Office - State Papers, Domestic, Charles I, XIII, no.15. I have not seen this autograph and depend on Calder for its text.
 2. Isabel MacBeath Calder, Letters of John Davenport, and in other places.
 3. The Rev. James Anderson was aware of this correspondence and he made use of it in his biography of Mary Vere in his Memorable Women of the Puritan Times; but only extracts from certain letters are printed.
 4. Mary Tracy married Sir Horace Vere in 1607 after the death of her first husband, William Hoby, and at the commencement of Sir Horace's career, cf. D.N.B.
 5. For an account of their lives see C.R. and D.N.B.

him was Sir Horace that he appointed him his chaplain, and it was while exercising this office that he wrote to Lady Vere.¹ Davenport, one of the leaders of New England Congregationalism, was born shortly before Perkins's death. It was as a young man fresh out of Oxford that he first came in contact with Lady Vere; she helped him secure the vicarage of St. Stephen, Coleman Street, London. During succeeding stormy years at St. Stephen, he carried on an extensive correspondence with her Ladyship; he continued it during his asylum in Holland and early ministry in New Haven. Davenport was always a controversial figure, being charged with "inconsistency, falsehood, and deception";² but to Lady Vere, he was always "a very present help in time of trouble". Richard Eedes was also an Oxford scholar and ordained in the Church of England; but his religious experience from that date on was one of oscillation. Like the pendulum of a clock, he alternately swung between Anglicanism and Presbyterianism. During the Civil War he moved over to Presbyterianism; but^{he} had tired of it by the Restoration, and^{he} longed for the king's return; yet by 1662 "he silenced himself";³ and^{he} did not again preach during the remaining

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1. The dates of this appointment are not certain. Mullinger, D.N.B. states: "About this time Ames married the daughter of Dr. Burgess, chaplain to Sir Horace Vere, the English Governor of Brill in Holland, and on Dr. Burgess resigning his chaplaincy, succeeded to his post. Vere, however, was prevailed upon by the authorities in England to dismiss Ames; and we next hear of the latter as employed by the Calvinistic party...to watch the proceedings of the Synod of Dort (1618-19)". Jessop, D.N.B., on the other hand, states that Burgess did not resign the chaplaincy until after 1620. This correspondence, some of which is dated 1621, tends to confirm Jessop. The remaining difficulty, Ames attending the Synod of Dort, can be solved if we assume that he preceded instead of succeeded Burgess. That would make him chaplain up to 1618 and Burgess from then on.
 2. Calder, op.cit., p.12.
 3. Wood, Athenae Oxoniensis, ii, 791f.

twenty-four years of his life; but in death he returned, or so¹ Wood says, to "the Communion of the Church of England". His letter to Lady Vere is dated April 15, 1653, placing it during his early Presbyterianism when he was minister at Beckford, Gloucestershire, and a member of the Worcestershire Association.² It doesn't appear that he was an active member, though; for he wrote to Baxter, about this time, complaining he was too feeble to attend the association's meetings.³

Mary Vere,⁴ the recipient of these letters, was one of the "first ladies" of the land. She was particularly noted for her religious fervour which she came by naturally.⁵ Her forbear William de Tracy was one of the infamous murderers of Thomas A' Becket. Her grandfather, Richard Tracy, living during the reign of Henry VIII, had adopted Lutheran ideas and though he died a natural death his body was burned at the stake.⁶ Lady Vere was a thorough going Puritan and that saintly friend of the Presbyterian party, Archbishop Usher, once wrote to her: "If I have any insight in things of this nature, or have any judgement to discern of spirits, I have clearly beheld engraven in your soul the image and superscription of my God".⁷ After Sir Horace's untimely death she was much in Parliament's

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1. Loc.cit.
 2. Cf. Geoffrey F. Nuttall, "The Worcestershire Association; its Membership", The Journal of Ecclesiastical History, Vol.I, pp.197-206.
 3. MSS. Baxter, II, 136.
 4. For an account of her life see D.N.B., "Horace Vere", Clarke, The Lives of Sundry Eminent Persons in this Later Age, Pt.II, and Anderson, Memorable Women of the Puritan Times.
 5. Richard Sibbes dedicated his book, Bruised Reed, to Sir Horatio Vere and "To his Pious Consort, the Lady Mary Vere...both exemplary in all Religious courses."
 6. Clarke, op.cit., Pt. II, 144.
 7. Quoted by Alexander Brown, Genesis of the United States, II, 1037.

favour and was briefly charged in the spring of 1645 with the care of Elizabeth and Henry, children of ill-fated Charles I. The children were not her wards long (for she was not ambitious of the charge), and so there was no opportunity for a grafting of her Dutch Reformed tenets, acquired while her husband was acting governor in the Netherlands, upon them; thus restoration England was spared the plight of an Anglican king with Puritan siblings (though it might have been more welcome than the conditions it had to endure). Lady Vere outlived her second husband by thirty-six years and the Commonwealth by eleven years, dying in her ninetieth year.

The Importance of these Letters

It is clear from the mere fact of their preservation together that someone thought these letters important; and further, that their importance is directly related to what they have in common, namely - the same addressee. That they have another common denominator, related to the first, and yet distinct from it, seems also clear. This latter affinity is their contemporaneous quality; which, according to Matthews,¹ is one of Puritanism's distinguishing features. He writes: "the Puritans", as contrasted with the Anglicans, "were international in outlook, a-historical and contemporary", laying "stress on preaching and on savoury discourse".² The savoury discourse, or "papery intercourse" as Davenport calls it, of these twenty letters is both timely and contemporary revealing how the pastoral concern of these seven men addressed

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1. The Social Structure in Caroline England, p.79.
 2. MSS. Birch 4275, f. 169-170.

itself to this truly international lady during the important and crucial moments of her life.¹

Notice now just how timely and contemporary these letters were.

- (1) October 12, n.d. Ames writes his farewell letter from the Hague, upon his dismissal as Sir Horace Vere's chaplain.²
- (2) March 6, 1617 (old style). Burgess writes upon her recovery from an illness which seized her in child birth.³
- (3) January 11, 1618 (old style). Chadderton writes from Cambridge upon the occasion of her son going up to Emmanuel College.⁴
- (4) March 30, n.d. Burgess writes from Germany, where he is acting as chaplain to Sir Horace, to thank Lady Vere for communicating the sad news of his wife's death and for tenderly caring for her during her last illness.⁵
- (5) February 19, n.d. Dod writes, also, upon the death of Mrs. Burgess.⁶
- (6) December 30, n.d. Dod writes upon the welcome return of her husband.⁷
- (7) n.d. Dod, though desirous of personally visiting her, writes instead, because of his weakness, upon hearing of the death of her son.⁸
- (8) March 17, 1624 (old style). Usher writes to thank her for the role she played in his securing of the Archbishopric of Armagh.⁹

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1. Prominent citizens were common targets for Puritan pastoral letters. Cf. John Nickolls, Editor, Original Letters and Papers of State Addressed to Oliver Cromwell and F.J. Powicke, "Correspondence between Richard Baxter and Lauderdale", Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, Vol. 7, pp. 73-105.
 2. MSS. Birch 4275, f.23. This letter was probably written just before Ames's left for the Synod of Dort.
 3. MSS. Birch 4275, f. 66.
 4. Ibid., f. 97. This son is William Hoby, off-spring of her first union, who was admitted Fellow-Commoner at Emmanuel, June 13, 1618, cf. Venn, op.cit.
 5. Ibid., f.68. Burgess's wife died early in the year 1621.
 6. Ibid., f.83. 7. Ibid., f. 85 8. Ibid., f. 87. 9. Ibid. f.31.

- (9) n.d. Davenport writes to ask her to intercede on his behalf with Sir Edward Conway, Secretary of State, concerning the pastorate of St. Stephen's, Coleman Street, London.¹
- (10) January 18, 1627 (old style). Davenport writes from St. Stephen's upon receiving news of her Ladyship's safe channel crossing. It is obvious from his letter that she had some misgivings about leaving her family, friends, and English religion; so he attempts to resolve her doubts.²
- (11) June 30, 1628. Davenport sends her a news letter telling of the persecutions instigated by "the new Bishop of London Dr. Laud". During the past six months new doubts, this time concerning her remaining at the Hague, have arisen; he takes this opportunity, therefore, to again resolve her doubts.³
- (12) December 26, 1629. Davenport sends her a thank you note, "an acknowledgement of the receipt of the token which it pleased your Hon to send to my wife".⁴
- (13) n.d. Davenport writes upon the occasion of his fleeing Laud and London. Because of the uncertainty of his future he recommends to her a new spiritual counsellor, a Mr. Harris.⁵
- (14) July 21, 1635. Davenport writes, this time from the Netherlands where he has fled, upon the death of Sir Horace.⁶

1. Public Record Office, State Papers, Domestic, Charles I, XIII, no. 15. Calder dates this letter on or before October 18, 1624, "for on that date Sir Edward Conway wrote to George Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury, in Davenport's behalf".

2. MSS. Birch 4275, f. 158-159.

3. Ibid., f. 160-161.

4. Ibid., f. 164-165. The gift was probably a Christmas present.

5. Ibid., f. 166. Calder lists Harris as being "unidentified". But his description, as will be noted later, fits John Harris (1588-1658) who was prebendary of Winchester and also chosen one of the members of the Westminster Assembly.

6. MSS. Birch 4275, f. 167-168. Horace Vere died of apoplexy on May 2, 1635.

- (15) 15/25 December 1635, Still mindful of her bereavement and other afflictions Davenport writes a letter filled with spiritual¹ counsel.
- (16) n.d. Davenport writes upon receiving news of the death of Lady Vere's son-in-law.²
- (17) 28th of the 7th Month, 1639. Davenport narrates for her the account of the Atlantic crossing which brought his son to New England; he thanks her for the loving way in which she cared for the boy; and he offers consolation, having heard of the death of another son-in-law.³
- (18) December 20, 1642. Dod, now in his nineties, laments the deplorable state of the nation.⁴
- (19) 13th Day of the 9th Month, 1647. Davenport's last letter to Lady Vere, written because "it is a long time since I heard from your Ladyship".⁵
- (20) April 15, 1653. Eedes writes to fix upon a time for the proposed conference that Lady Vere desires.⁶

1. Ibid., f. 169-170

2. MSS. Birch 4275, f. 162-163. Sir Roger Townshend, husband of Mary Vere, the Vere's second daughter, died January 1, 1636/7.

3. MSS. Birch 4275, f. 171-172. Davenport has now adopted the early New England method of denouncing the nomenclature of the Roman calendar. The son is John; he was born in the Netherlands and baptized at the English Church at the Hague. William Steven, The Scottish Church at Rotterdam, p. 310) on April 15, 1635. The Davenports sailed for New England two years later and so Lady Vere, as the letter indicates, must have cared for the child during the years 1637-1639. Oliver St. John, husband of Catherine, the Vere's third daughter, died sometime in 1639.

4. MSS. Birch 4275, f. 91.

5. MSS. Birch 4275, f. 173-174.

6. MSS. Birch 4275, f. 206.

The Letters' Contents

Having now noted, in a general way, the timeliness and contemporaneous quality of these pastoral letters, it remains to be demonstrated, in a specific way, just how contemporaneous each pastor was. We begin with Ames and his farewell letter. "Seeing", he writes, "that I cannot any longer perform that office toward you which for some time I have; I thought good in a few words, as it were, to seale up y^t which is passed". This sealing up of the past is only accomplished in the present; therefore, he offers the twin instructions: "use all diligence for y^e stirring up, confirming & increasing of y^e grace of God in your self. Many occasions you shall meete with of deadening religion in your self: you have neede therefore to be well armed;" and

one warning I will be bold to give you and that concerning y^e passing or spending of time in what businesse & with what companie, it would be well regarded. To spende much time, with those which have no fervour of true godlynesse in their carriage, about idle & vague toys, fashions, etc. it bringeth emptiness & heaviness to y^e best, but to make choyce of companie & to use it unto some good purpose, that is comfortable for y^e time & leaveth a sweete relish after it.

Nothing could be more timely than these words; for although now deprived of Ames's pastoral care, Lady Vere has not been completely forsaken. She has a sheet of treasured instruction, which, to paraphrase Baynes, will dwell by her and talk with her so often as she reads it attentively.

Sometime after this rupture between pastor and friend, Lady Vere became so dangerously ill that rumours of her death were continually circulating about the court. She recovered from her illness, but not from its debilitating effects. Time, however, gradually restored her to her former self. When John Burgess received word of the good news he penned an immediate reply. His purpose, beside rejoicing in

her recovery, was to bolster up her faith: "Doubt not but the same God will stand by you, and accomplish all that good upon which your soul can desire".

Shortly after this illness, Lady Vere's son went up to Cambridge as she was readying herself to accompany her husband to the Netherlands, though in fact she did not immediately go over. At this time she received a letter which must have been a welcome sight. It was from the venerable Laurence Chadderton, Master of Emmanuel College, and ^{it was} written at the end of her son's first six months in this Puritan school. He did not write very much but what he did write was calculated to give her satisfaction and set her mind at ease during the ensuing years abroad. "The more experience I have of your Sonne," he wrote, "y^e better I lyke and love him: for I fynd his inclination to bee unto any good of learning and vertue: besydes his true and sincere affection to pure religion; whereby hee hath gayned my resolution to further him in all these, so much as in me lyeth". During the next several years, the sight of this letter must have brought a great deal of peace to her anxious heart and mind; it served to remind her that the spiritual father of so many of the Puritans was watching over her son with special interest.

The death of John Burgess's wife brought two letters. The one from a sorrowful yet grateful husband, the other from John Dod, friend of both the deceased and the living. The two letter writers suppressed their own grief in order to comfort her in the loss of her "dear friend".

About two years after this last is a series of afflictions. Lady Vere finally had good reason to rejoice, her husband was

coming home from the wars. Just as her pastoral friends had been close to her in sorrow, so now one of them joined with her in rejoicing, reminding her that just as afflictions should cause one to turn to God, so also should joy. Dod counsels her: "forget not to yield due thanks and praise for his safe return, not only because the Lord hath kept him from all dangers by sea and land, but especially because our gracious God hath most mercifully preserved him and you all from evil work, and will still preserve you unto his heavenly kingdom".

Lady Vere's joy was short lived. At the close of this year, she suffered the loss of a son. Again, Dod wrote to her. He knew that she would not question the inevitability of death, but that she would wonder why she was robbed of the bloom of youth. He addresses himself to this problem:

We all confess that we and our children are subject to death, but all the question is, which is the fittest time for every man's death. If flesh may be judge, it will think it unfit and unseasonable for any of our friends to die while we live. But the holy scriptures will teach us that whensoever it pleaseth the most wise and righteous God to call any out of this life, that is the most seasonable and fit time for his death; for the Lord knoweth best when his corn is ripe, and when to gather his fruit, and he doeth all things in fullness of time.

The next two letters in our list are concerned with two men's receiving calls. Their value is not in what they say, but what they reflect of the character of Lady Vere. They reveal her as a woman

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1. Lady Vere had at least two sons by her first marriage. William Ames dedicates his catechism, The Chiefe Heads of Divinitie (1612) to them: "To the Hopefull young Gentlemen Mr. William and Phillip Hobie, Sonnes to the Honourable Lady, the Lady Vere". There is no record, however, as to which one died at this time.

deeply concerned for religion, and not so biased as to consider either Puritanism or Anglicanism the only true way.

During the next ten years, Lady Vere seems to have relied, almost exclusively, upon young John Davenport, for help with her spiritual difficulties. His ten letters are of a mixed variety; some are of a personal nature, dealing with himself and his family; others offer resolution, comfort and consolation; and one comes inquiring into the state of her spiritual and physical health.

Those letters dealing with himself, though truly contemporary, are not strictly pastoral; yet, at times, they mirror the pastor's hand. As when in thanking her for a gift sent to his wife, he assures her by way of repayment, "that what ever interest I have in Jesus Christ, and by him in fellowship with his people, at the throne of Grace, it is wholly for your advantage, if in anything, I may express the reality of my thankfulnes to your Hono^r for many favours formerly received". In his letter explaining, or rather justifying, his action in leaving St. Stephen's, knowing that he will be unable to act as her spiritual adviser for an indefinite period of time, he recommends another to take his place. His choice is both wise and humourous. Mr. Harris, he writes, is "a very worthy man of a very gracious hearte, humble, mild, of gentle spirit, a man not at all taken notice of by the Bishops. He is weake and sickly, but you need not be discouraged by that; but his spirit is very active in good, he is very fitt for your occasions in all respects".

His letters of resolution and consolation are of a distinctly pastoral nature. The letters of the former group are addressed to Lady Vere's reluctance to go to the Netherlands and to her desire to

leave the Hague. His counsel is both Biblical and practical. Knowing her reluctance to leave England to be twofold: an unwillingness to leave family and friends and a fear of the consequence of her sojourn, he reminds her of Hagar and likens her to Sarah:

Sett an higher price upon your prayers. Use and injoy that interest which you have in Gods favour through Christ... Hagar was a bondwoaman cast out of the church, shee prayed not, but wept, shee looked not up to God but upon her Ishmaell that scoffing Ismaell. Yet God heard and helped her. Will he not mush more regard Sarah who leaves her owne country and fathers house to goe with Abraham in obedience to God, when shee seeketh his face by prayer for herselfe and family wherein Gods name is called upon?

We have no clue why Lady Vere desired to remove from the Hague or where she wanted to go. The question for her must have been a burning one, though, because Davenport was not satisfied to render a decision himself, but ^{he} called in a second opinion. He tells her: "Dr. Sibbs and I have had some conferences", and "we both agree in this conclusion that, except absolute necessity inforce, you shoulde not remove your dwelling, both in respect of the benefitt your family may have by being members of a congregacion (besides theyre helpe at home) and in respect of the helpe and encouragm^t the ministry and course of religion in the Hague may have by your countenance and ¹example". This is not his last word, however, for he recognizes that her own feelings are important, too, and so concludes: "But if this be not sufficient, we desire that you would propose the question with your owne opinion and reasons more fully, and we will indeavour to satisfye your Lap. by a more full answer". In this

1. Steven, op.cit., states that as early as 1610, Colonel Horace Vere was interested in the English Church at the Hague. The name of its second minister, Samuel Balmford, frequently appears in this correspondence.

and all other situations Davenport had a decided advantage, for he was appealing to one, who he was sure "will so glorifye, and adorne the gospell, that we shall all have just cause to say, Many daughters have done vertuously but thou excellest them all".

As one might expect, death and a ministry to the bereaved figures uppermost in these letters. Within the brief period of four years, three members of Lady Vere's family died. Upon each occasion of death, Davenport responds with surprising alacrity. Like Paul Baynes, his concern is for the living and his message from the Bible. Upon the death of her husband, he wrote: "Yea, looke higher (Madam) from the dead to the living. The relation which once you had to this earthly husband is ended, and ceaseth in his death, but the relation you have to our heavenly father remayneth inviolable. With David, Eli, and Job, she is asked to realize that death is the work of the Lord, "lett him doe what seemeth good in his owne eyes". Upon the death of her two sons-in-law, she is urged to remember the plight of Naomi who lost her husband, two sons, and daughter-in-law, and heartened by the words: "Blessed be the Lord which hath not left thee this day without kinsmen". After the news of a third death, the young pastor felt it necessary to put an interpretation upon all the preceding events. This is his judgement: "the mortality of earthly comforts, and the dissoluableness of the marriage bond with the creature", is in order to "quicken us to secure our interest in the everliving God, and our marriage with the Lord Jesus Christ by an everlasting Covenant of his free Grace, which nothing can dissolve!"

A lapse of eight years ensues between this letter and his final

letter to her Ladyship. Indeed, it is because of this lapse in correspondence that he writes another letter. He inquires into her spiritual well being and physical health hoping to begin a new correspondence with his dear friend. Apparently, he was unsuccessful, but this was not for lack of trying.

The final letter from this collection, that of Richard Eedes, is very short; probably intended only as a note of confirmation. Lady Vere is now in her seventies; her older advisors are all dead or, as is the case with Davenport, living too far away to be of any real help. Eedes was quite flattered that she should seek him out for a private conference: "As I have beene ever since I knew y^e covetous of serving yo^r hono^r so most covetous to serve y^e in the things of Christ; I therefore blesse God for y^e opportunity, & return my humble thanks to yo^r La^y y^t y^e have layd aside those y^t are most able, & fixed upon one y^t is most willing". Because she was such an important personage Eedes set the date of their meeting for "Wednesday ten night y^e 27 of this Moneth, because I much longe to have o^r Lecture countenanced with yo^r La^y presence the next day". Alas, however, we are given no indication of the nature of her problem and no record of what transpired at the conference, if ever held.

In leaving Lady Vere and her pastor friends, one cannot help but feel that the Puritans really were vitally concerned with the passage of daily life and genuinely interested in giving and receiving help for troublesome times; all of which is reflected in these following bits of correspondence.

Lay Interest: Nehemiah Wallington

The pastoral letter, as we have now seen, was a very useful and important ally to the Puritan clergy of the seventeenth century, but it was not their exclusive property; there was also a great deal of lay interest in its use. No better testimony of this fact is needed than the Swarthmore Documents, a collection of over 1,400 letters written by Quakers during the middle decades of the century,¹ and the correspondence of Oliver Cromwell. A little volume of Letters now resting in the Manuscript Room of the British Museum² is an excellent example of this lay interest. It contains the best of sixteen centuries of pastoral letter writing, beginning with the Johannine epistles and concluding with several from the pens of seventeenth century Puritan and Anglican pastors.

Its editor, Nehemiah Wallington (1598-1658),³ was a London turner sometime in trouble for his Puritan sympathies. On one occasion, about the time of the commencement of this work, he was summoned before the Court of the Star Chamber on the charge of possessing prohibited books; he managed to avoid punishment, however, by pleading that he no longer owned them. As a young man, he often engaged his pen in writing critical judgements of his time;⁴ but the later years of his life were spent in copying, in a rough and yet legible hand, devotional letters.

1. For this subject see Abram Rawlinson Barclay, Editor, Letters, etc. of Early Friends, Henry J. Cadbury, Editor, "Letters to William Dewsbury and Others", Journal of the Friends' Historical Society, No. 22, and Geoffrey F. Nuttall, "Early Quaker Letters from the Swarthmore MSS to 1660", unpublished pamphlet, The Library, Friends' House, London.

2. MSS Sloan, 922.

3. Cf. D.N.B. for an account of his life.

4. His three extant works are: Historical Notes and Meditations. Wallington's Journal and A Record of Numerous Strange Portents which had occurred in various parts of England; all three works are in manuscript form.

A note on the last leaf of his book bearing the inscription, "Nehemiah Wallington his Booke 1655", suggests that perhaps this was the year of its commencement, while a second inscription, "Nehemiah Wallington his Booke 1650", appearing on the front leaf, indicates that this was probably the year of its completion.

The Intensity of the Lay Interest Revealed in these Letters

There is first of all the interest of Wallington, himself. He obviously thought these letters worth while or he would not have spent, off and on, fifteen years in transcribing them. It seems clear from some notes made in a shaky hand on one of the back leaves that this was one of his devotional manuals. The page reads:

1658 I have y^e XXIII by the marcy of God
I have read over this my writing Booke which is coppies of
precious Letters wherein I observed a few things.

2 Rules to find whether God be with us or no	p.102
3 Motives why we should bare y ^e Losse of Relations	p.108
Comfort in Affliction	p.118
3 Rules for Comfort	p.148
6 Causes of Sadnesse in the Worship of God	p.150
4 Observations of y ^e danger in immoderat sorrow	p.152
4 Causes of Comfort	p.151
Tryd Grace is precious grace	p.350
4 Ways we suffer as a Christian	

Further, it seems clear from the format of the book, its preface "To All Readers", and the inclusion of a "Table of Contents", that Wallington intended its publication or at least a wider circulation than his own family. The book was never published, though, perhaps, death intervened.

A note in the same handwriting as the main section of the book and bearing a date in the same year as its author's death suggests that he handed the book on so that another layman might find it as valuable as he had found it. The note reads:

¹
"Jonathan Houghton September IX 1658".

One other indication of the extent of lay interest in pastoral letter writing is to be found in the letters themselves. For besides the inclusion of letters from the pens of the great there is also to be found in this book, eight letters written by members of Wallington's own family and friends. They are as distinctly pastoral as any of the letters in the collection, and ^{they} reflect a genuine attempt to imitate, in a sincere way, the style and content of some of the more renowned writers in the book.

Content of the Eight Letters

Wallington's headings read:

- (1) A letter sent unto mee (Nehemiah Wallington) from my wives Brother (Livewell Rampaine) when the hand of God in Sicknesse was in my Family in 1625.
- (2) Another letter from my wives Brother Master L.R. to his brother N.W. which is answers of comfort to his troubled spirit.
- (3) A Letter of Master L.R. sent to his brother N.W. concerning consolling with him and instruction.
- (4) A Letter of John Bradshaw to his Grand Father Master John Wallington concerning the misery and trouble of Rachel.
- (5) A Letter of Master L.R. to his Brother N.W. concerning the uses of the misery of Rachel and encouraging to patient baring affliction.
- (6) A few words of comfort by Master H.R. sent to N.W.
- (7) A Letter of Master I.W. to his Grandchild I.B. admonishing him to have a regard to his Soule.
- (8) A Letter to Master I.W. and his wife Mist.M.W. advising them to have a care in y^e matching of their Daughter. ³

1. Cf. Letters and Papers of the Verney Family Down to the end of year 1639, ed. John Bruce, (Camden Society), for another instance of family interest in pastoral letter writing.

2. H.R. should probably read L.R. for Livewell Rampaine, Wallington's brother-in-law. There was a Livewell Rampaine at Cambridge during the first quarter of the century who later took orders; but there is no indication that he is the Livewell Rampaine mentioned above.

3. Author anonymous.

The letters' contents are self evident from this list and the reader will agree that they do not appear to be any different from the letters of Baynes or Davenport.

We conclude this section with an extract from the letter of John Wallington to his grandson. It is an excellent example of the quality of these letters.

John Bradshaw to write much would be tedious to you. Yet out of the tenderness of mine affections of my heart and and love unto you I cannot refraine but still to put you in mind to use all your best skill and uttermost endeavour that it might goe well with your poore Soule....I think this is the last letter that ever I shall write unto you, you are going a long journey and I am almost at my journeys end in this world. So it is a thousand to one wee shall never see one another againe in this sinfull world....Then I shall not any more with weeping teares pray for you any more. Then I shall not with tender affections admonish you and counsell you anymore as I have often done since you were able to understand good from evill. And although you would seldome come at mee when you were nere mee on land to heare my counsell, yet forget not now you are far on the water to read those papers and books that I put in to your chest. And for a farewell this I do earnestly advise you as to shunne all sinne and vise...and imbrace all vertueO John Bradshaw I advise you often to remember these things that is the evill you have committed, the good you have omitted, the time you have misspent, the shortness of this life, the vanity of this world, the excellency of the world to come. Death then y^e which nothing is more terrible, the day of judgement then the which nothing is more fearfull. Hell fire then the which nothing is more intollerable. The Lord make you wise to consider these things. Amen. Amen. O Lord of thy grate goodness say Amen.

In a postscript reminiscent of Baynes, he concludes: "Cast not away this paper but keepe it by you. If it doe no good for the present it may doe you good heare after when God shall be pleased to enlighten your understanding".

Some later Letter Writers: 1660-1700

We round out this chapter on the pastoral letter by looking at several later letter writers. For convenience's sake, they have been grouped into four categories: letters from prison, letters to the family, letters to the bereaved and letters to the troubled.

Letters from Prison

Joseph Alleine,¹ though short lived, was one of the more important mid-century Puritans; particularly because of his work, Alarm to the Unconverted. Alleine was an Oxford scholar where "all that knew him, knew him to be good as a linguist; smart as a disputant, and an excellent philosopher".² After receiving his B.A. degree, he briefly served as a family chaplain and as a member of the Somerset Commission, and then was called as assistant minister at St. Mary Magdalene Church, Taunton. He remained in this post for seven years and was then ejected. He was twice imprisoned for his failure to conform and it was while incarcerated that he wrote his letters and the foundation was laid "for that weakness which suddenly after surprised him, and was his death".³ After his death, Baxter wrote of him: "If you ask, 'What labours hath he left behind him?' I answer; first, the great numbers of holy souls converted, confirmed, and edified by his doctrine, and the example of his holy life...which he hath left to the neighbouring ministers

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1. For an account of his life see C.R. and Baxter, An Account of the Life and Death of the Rev. Joseph Alleine.
 2. Baxter, op. cit., p. 30.
 3. Ibid., p. 85.

that knew him, and to those that now possess their places, and to all the ministers of the land, and to the ages that are yet to come Secondly ¹ his writings".

Not the least of his writings were his Christian Letters.² In commenting on this letter writer, Baxter exclaims: "Oh! how happy were the church of God, if great understanding and fervent zeal were ordinarily as well conjoined, as they were in this worthy man!"³ John Wesley sang his praises, too:

The Letters of Mr. Samuel Rutherford, have been generally admired by all the children of God, into whose hands they have fallen, for the vein of piety, trust in God, and holy zeal, which run through them. The same piety, zeal, and confidence in God, shine through all the letters of Mr. Alleine: So that in this respect he may well be styled, The English Rutherford. But yet there is a very discernable difference between them: In piety and fervour of spirit they are the same: But the fervour of the one more resembles that of St. Paul, and of the other, that of St. John. They were both men of the most intrepid courage: But in love Mr. Alleine has the pre-eminence. He seems to excel in bowels of mercy, meekness, gentleness, in tenderness, mildness and sweetness of spirit, even to his bitterest enemies. I do not therefore scruple to give these Letters the preference, even to Mr. Rutherford's: As expressing, in a still higher degree, the love that is "long-suffering and kind", which "is not provoked", which "thinketh no evil," and "which hopeth, believeth and endureth all things".

Of his forty-four extant letters,⁴ thirty-one were written during his first imprisonment. The titles of these epistles, from ~~as~~ self styled "Ambassador in bonds", are very suggestive of their contents. Some were written to prepare his people for a like suffering, both physical and spiritual: "Prepare for Suffering", "Easy Suffering", "Right Reasons for Suffering", "Warning to Professors of their Danger", "For Perseverance", and "Look out of your Graves upon the World". Others were intended to

1. Baxter, op.cit., p.22

2. Ibid, p.iv

3. A Christian Library (1826 edn.), Vol. 29, p.278

4. Works, II.

build-up faith in the shepherdless flock: "Trust in God, and be Sincere", "Persuasion to Sinners, and Comfort to Saints," "The Worth of Holiness", "Counsel for Salvation", "Of the Second Coming of Christ", and "Salvation". Others instructed the flock in living the good life and offered helps to that end: "First, Christian Marks - Second, Duties", "For Daily Self-Examination", "How to live to God", and "Motives to Set Ourselves to Please God".

Wesley was right when he wrote: "in love Mr. Alleine has the pre-eminence". No lover ever wrote more amorously than he. The copies of his letters are as scented with the fragrance of holiness and devotion to God, as the originals must have been. Each succeeding page is a reminder of Alleine's feeling for his "most endearing and endeared friends, the flock of Christ at Taunton!" The only one to whom he shows little, if any, love is himself. He squanders no time bemoaning his own condition or soliciting sympathy for himself; he strives instead, through an abundant outpouring of mercy and gentle rebuke, to guide his sheep even from "the common gaol".

One quotation from the concluding paragraph of his letter "For Daily Self-Examination" seems to express the piety, zeal, and confidence, which Wesley saw shining through all of them:

My pen is apt to run, when I am writing to you. I beseech you, that my letters may not be as much waste paper to you; may they be provocations to your duty, and medicines to any corruptions that they meet with: Oh that they might find out men's sins, and excite their graces! I have run much further than I thought I should have done, but now I am called upon, and must shut up. The Lord God be a sun and shield to you. My most dear love to you all; fare you well in the Lord.

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Thomas Hardcastle also wrote letters from prison to his congregation. During his second imprisonment, which lasted six months, he wrote weekly to his Bristol congregation, the Broadmead Baptist Church. "Gems" from these letters have been preserved by Haycroft in The Records of the church. These extracts are full of proverbial saying: "A saint of God may be weary in his works but he is never weary of his work;" "Keep your consciences, keep your confidences, keep your communions, and all is well enough;" and "God can spy a fault in the intention, when the most observing men can find none in the action". Like Alleine, Hardcastle was concerned to prepare his people for suffering and to warn them against falling into temptation.

Calamy mentions that Robert Franklyn, Francis Holcroft and Samuel Wells were also noted for their letters written from prison. Franklyn's were written from Aylesbury jail to his wife. Holcroft's were written to a "gathered" church in Cambridgeshire, which he had formed after his ejection. Wells wrote from his self imposed "imprisonment" at Deddington to his congregation and friends at Banbury.

Letters to the Family

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Philip Henry is one of those shadowy figures of history better known for an illustrious son than for anything in his own right. Matthew Henry, the famous Biblical expositor, was second

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1. For an account of his life see C.R.
 2. For an account of his life see C.R., D.N.B., and An Account of the Life and Death of Mr. Philip Henry by Matthew Henry.

son to Philip. The elder, Henry, was called as Curate of Worthenbury, Bangor, Flintshire, after his graduation from Oxford. Following St. Bartholemew's Day, and his ejection, he led a chequered life; he was imprisoned in 1663 for preaching in conventicles; ten years later, along with many others, he received a license to preach; but in 1681, he was fined for his preaching, and four years later, he was again imprisoned. The last six years of his life were spent ministering at Broad Oak, Cheshire. During these stormy years, he attained a stature among his brethren which was second to none. Calamy testifies of him: "Of all ejected ministers the most generally honoured for holy living".

His best known writings are his diaries¹, among the pages of which are to be found a few of his letters.² Unfortunately, laments his son, "he kept no Copies of his Letters, and it is impossible to retrieve them from the Hands into which they were scattered."³ The younger Henry gives this estimate of his father's letter writing:⁴

As to his Letters; he was very free in writing to his Friends. A good Letter, he would say, may perhaps do more good than a good Sermon, because Address is more particular, and that which is written remains. His Language and Expressions in his Letters were always pious and heavenly, and seasoned with the Salt of Grace; and when there was occasion, he would excellently administer Counsels, Reproofs or Comforts by Letter.

Most of his extant letters are addressed to members of his

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1. Diaries and Letters of Philip Henry, ed. Matthew Henry Lee.
 2. Several autograph sermons and letters are also to be found in the John Rylands Library, Manchester.
 3. Matthew Henry, op.cit., p.255. Lee was more successful than his namesake, he retrieved sixty-six of the Letters, but did not publish all of them.
 4. Ibid., p.255.

own family. Some of his letters written to his son, Matthew, while the latter was at Doolittle's Academy, Gray's Inn, and his first charge, still remain. In them, he sought always to direct his son to God and to encourage him in his studies. Matthew was particularly fond of the following letter written to him on the eve of his¹ ordination:

Are you now a Minister of Jesus Christ? Hath he counted you faithful, putting you into the Ministry? then be faithful; out of love to him feed his Lambs. Make it your Business, as a workman that needs not be ashamed, rightly dividing the words of Truth. I hope what you experienced of the Presence of God with you in the Solemnity, hath left upon you a true indelible Character, and such impressions, as neither time, nor any thing else shall be able to wear out....I am, and shall be, according to my Duty and Promise, earnest at the Throne of Grace on your behalf, that the Lord will pour out upon you of his holy Spirit; that what he calls you to, he would fit you for; especially that he would take you off your own bottom, and lay you low in the Sense of your own Unworthiness, Inability and Insufficiency...Now the Lord give you that Grace to be humble; and then according to his Promise, he will make you rich in every other Grace.

He wrote, too, to the other members of his family: to his wife, Katherine, whom he fondly addresses as "My Dear Heart"; to his daughters and their husbands; and to his cousins. The letters to his daughters were most timely and appropriate. When he heard that his youngest daughter was contemplating an early marriage he wrote advising her to wait awhile, "till the time come when it shall be thought proper, by mutuall consent, that I contract you", and, in the meantime, to be satisfied with waiting upon the "universal² providence" of God for all benefits in the present and future. He was a proud grandfather and never failed to send his daughters congratulatory letters upon their safe delivery in child birth.

1. Matthew Henry, op.cit., p. 262f.

2. James Montgomery, The Christian Correspondent: Letters, III, 164ff.

When necessary he ably consoled them in the death of one of their little ones. The one preserved letter addressed to his cousin, who "in a very short time had buried all their Children of the SmallPox", ¹ is a remarkable example of consolation:

It is not for the clay to quarrel with the Potter. It was Mercy you had children, and comfort in them so long; it is Mercy that you have yet one-another, and your Children are not lost, but gone before, a little before, whither you yourselves are hastening after. And if a Storm be coming, (as God grant it be not) it is best with them that put first into the Harbour. Your Children are taken away from the Evil to come, and you must not mourn as they that have no hope.

The correspondence of another gentleman farmer, John Pinney, ² has also been preserved and published. He was a clergyman distinguished for no better reason than that he was successor to the worthy Thomas Fuller as Vicar of Broadwindsor in Dorset. His letters to his family are no less ordinary than himself, but ^{they} are the more valuable because they represent a type. They neither abound with Scriptural quotations nor Biblical wisdom; they seldom, if ever, transcend the terrestrial sphere; their author certainly does not rank with the great letter writers of the century; but they are an excellent example of what the average Puritan minister wrote, by way of letter, to his own family during the fallow years of the Restoration. Pinney's letters served three general purposes: to advise all members of the family of each other's financial, economic and social situation; to keep the family together through frequent communication; and to administer parental authority over long distances.

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1. Montgomery, *op.cit.*, II, 40ff
 2. Geoffrey F. Nuttall, Editor, Letters of John Pinney. All quotations and references are from this edition.

There are several striking examples of this last. When he heard that his daughter, Rachel, was frequenting the "Vintner", whom also she intended marrying, he sent her a hurried word of caution. His "great griefe & sorrow" at the news was not unreasonable for, as he reminded her, her "sister Mary...so oft¹ hath wished herselfe dead for the misery of a wicked husband". He pleads with her not to invite the same calamity and so "make yourselfe a scorne, a reproach a dead marke to be laughed at to disoblige all your friends & Expose your parents to Shame & griefe". He treated the ~~discretion~~ of his daughter, Hester, in an even more positive way. After noticing that one of her letters bore the return address of a Dublin inn he sent this immediate reply: "I am not satisfi²ed wth yo^r living in a taverne a place of so many temptations & dangers". He enforced his authority by quickly³ dispatching a member of his congregation to rescue her. Twice, he intervened by letter in Hester's wedding plans. The first time was at her request; she asked his opinion of the man of her choice. He wrote back to her: "your aged father utterly discent⁴s from your marriage wth this man Mr. Hoskins...I find not one person that gives him a good report but all speak Evill of him as a lascivious man". She apparently agreed with her father but not⁵ until some "hard thoughts & words" had been exchanged. Three years later, without her asking, he again ventured to advise her concerning her proposed marriage. This time, he found her choice

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| 1. Letter | 4. | Dublin, July 11, 1682, p. 11ff. |
| 2. Letter | 26. | Dublin, April 18, 1687, p. 51f. |
| 3. Letter | 27. | Dublin, June 17, 1687, p. 52f. |
| 4. Letter | 57. | 1696, p. 99ff. |
| 5. Letter | 61. | October, 1699, p. 103ff. |

acceptable ("I have Esteem of y^e man") but not the conditions that the marriage would impose upon her. Her intended husband was a widower, twice removed, and marriage to him meant assuming the responsibility of his big family - "a family at first dash greater than even yo^r Mother saw after 48 years marriage."¹ The elder Pinney thought this too much to ask of any woman and so tried to discourage Hester from fulfilling the contract.

Pinney's letters, filled with business matters and parental discipline, were none-the-less effective in holding the scattered family together and giving each member a degree of stability not afforded by the disturbed times.

Other men, John Goodwin and Jonathan Hanmer,² for instance, have left behind them letters to their family. The preserved letters of Goodwin are to his wife, and³ ^{they} were written during his absence from her; but they say little really worth quoting. Hanmer's letters to his son while the latter was at Cambridge have⁴ not completely escaped oblivion, either. The father was himself an Emmanuel man and so could write with feeling and knowledge about the trials and temptations of university life. The letters made such an impression upon the son that he imitated his father's habit and style, and^{he} is mentioned by Calamy as also being a worthy letter writer.

1. Letter 61.
2. For an account of their lives see C.R.
3. Public Records Office, Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1663-4, p.272ff.
4. Calamy quotes from five of them, cf. Palmer, Nonconformist Memorial, II, 6-8.

Letters to the Bereaved and Dying

John Owen and John Howe, fifteen years Owen's junior and one of the last of the ejected ministers to die, during the twilight years of their lives guided many "through the valley of the shadow of death." Orme¹ claims that "Owen, Goodwin, Baxter, and Howe, were the four leading men among the Non-conformist worthies." It is not strange then to see the two conjoined here.

Of all their writings their letters are the least known. This is because few of them are now extant, and those that are have never seemed to capture the popular fancy.² Of the few letters which are available, a decided majority were written to the bereaved and dying.

Three of Owen's letters of consolation are extant. They were written to the wife of Sir John Hartopp, nonconformist member of Parliament during the reign of Charles II, upon the death of her child; to the wife of Edward Polhill, religious writer, upon the death of a near relative; and to Charles Fleetwood, father of Elizabeth Hartopp and an officer in the Parliamentary Army, as he lay upon his death bed.³ This last letter is of particular interest because it was written only two days before Owen's death and so, to paraphrase Baxter, it was from a dying man to a dying man. Part of it reads:⁴

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1. William Orme, Memoirs of The Life, Writings, and Religious Connexions of John Owen, p.474
 2. In an interview with Professor Geoffrey Nuttall of London University, he informed me that a great mass of Owen's correspondence lay dormant in the New College, London, library. I was unable to consult it and can only regret that someone has not yet made a thorough study of it.
 3. For an account of the lives of these three cf. D.N.B.
 4. Montgomery, op.cit., I, 23f. Owen died on August 24, 1683, but Fleetwood did not die for another ten years.

God is fastening his instruction concerning the approach of that season, wherein I must lay down this tabernacle Help me with your prayers, that I may through the riches of his grace in Christ, be in some measure ready for my account. The truth is, we cannot see the latter rain in its season, as we have seen the former, and a latter spring thereon: death, that will turn in the streams of glory upon our poor withering souls, is the best relief. I begin to fear that we shall die in the wilderness; yet ought we to labour and pray continually, then the heavens would drop down from above, and the skies pour down righteousness, that the earth open and bring forth salvation, and that the righteousness may spring up together.

Howe, who so often preached the funeral sermon of many a nonconformist clergyman, also used his pen to exercise a ministry of consolation. He wrote "to a friend on the loss of an excellent wife,"¹ "to a gentlewoman, on the loss of a beloved daughter,"² to a couple upon the death of their parents and later upon the death of their son,³ and "to Lady Rachel Russell, shortly after the execution of her noble husband."⁴ Montgomery says of the last letter, it is "one of the noblest and most pathetic pieces of epistolary composition in the languages."⁵ The author neither patronizes Lady Russell nor condemns her husband, nor does he lavish her with mere sentimentality; he is concerned only in revealing both the love of God and the justice of God.

1. Montgomery, op.cit., II, 86ff.

2. Ibid., p. 90ff.

3. Ibid., p.69ff.

4. Ibid., p.88f.

5. Loc.cit.

Letters to the Troubled

As has been noted throughout this chapter, one of the main uses of the pastoral letter was to aid the troubled and resolve the doubtful. This has been a long century of such letter writing. Thomas Wilcox, one of Cartwright's Presbyterians, wrote many letters in answer to cases of conscience.¹ The celebrated John Cotton while a student at Cambridge, "answered many Letters that were sent him far and near, wherein were handled many difficult Cases of Conscience, and many doubts cleared to great satisfaction."² Still later in the century, the name of George Hughes is kept alive by Calamy, who states that he was "a judicious casuist" often consulted through the post.³ In the next chapter attention shall be focused upon the correspondence of Richard Baxter, who was often consulted by the troubled and perplexed. But before turning to Baxter, two other letter writers demand attention.

The first is John Hieron, a Cambridge and Christ's College man, and one of the ejected.⁴ During his later years, 1668-1681, he settled at Losco, Derbyshire, and there preached and

wrote many Letters, upon divers occasions, to several Persons to a very good purpose; they are of the same make with his Sermons as he Printed; so his constant Preaching was; he went abroad in the same Cloaths he wore at home. As he Preached, so he Wrote; such as his Sermons, such his Letters; proving himself, as was said of Ezra, a ready scribe Ezra 7:6. in the word which the Lord had given. A great wisdom he had in bringing down general Rules to particular Cases; he manifested in them great concern for Souls, and faithfulness to them.⁵

1. Brook, Lives of the Puritans, ii, 193.

2. Palmer, op. cit., II, 59.

3. For an account of his life see Robert Porter, The Life of John Hieron.

4. Palmer, op. cit., II, 28.

5. Ibid., pp. 58-95.

Of his twenty letters still preserved, a quarter of them are addressed to the sorrowing and bereaved. The majority of the remaining ones are addressed to those who sought and needed spiritual help.

Many were troubled about the condition of their "Spiritual Estate". The question of sanctification was a particularly perplexing one. Asked one correspondent: "How shall I know whether I am led by the Spirit?"¹ Hieron answered in true Pauline fashion:²

If you bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, if you follow after Holiness, sincere Obedience to all Gods Commandments, patience in Affliction, love to God, Christ, all Saints, love to the Word, fear to offend God, a care to please God, and keep Conscience pure and void of offence toward God and Man, Godly sorrow for sin, forsaking every evil way; and above all, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, rest upon him, trust in his all-sufficient satisfaction for pardon of Sin and Eternal Life.

Hieron encouraged those who commenced this pilgrimage to continue on to the end. He wrote to one, who had put off his "former Conversation and abandoned all vain company," to "Resolve by the help of Grace, that you will never cast off your hopeful beginning, nor turn aside to crooked wayes; but continue stedfast in the good way you have taken up unto the end. The end is that which crowneth all good actions; and to perseverance in well-doing are all the promises made."³ His final letter is typical of most he wrote, being simply "a word of Spiritual Advice and Direction". To the spiritually troubled, his counsel is:⁴

Take heed of bad company, which are infectious. Shun them as you would shun the Plague....Come not near the door of an Harlot, or Harlots house....Let sin be the grief and burden of

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1. Porter, op. cit., p. 58.
 2. Loc. cit.
 3. Ibid., p. 65.f.
 4. Ibid., p. 94.f. Losco. June 19, 1680

your heart....For this end you must diligently and constantly attend on the Word, which is the ordinary means which God hath appointed to beget and increase Faith....Have a care to keep holy the Sabbath-day constantly; and no day neglect reading the Scripture. And let fervent Prayer be your Morning and Evening Sacrifice continually; and pray God to put his fear in your heart, that you may never depart from him....Daily be faithful and filigent in your Calling; be courteous to all men, do evil to none; speak evil of no man, live soberly, be temperate in all things. Let the chief care of your heart, and endeavour of your life be to serve and please God; that he may bless you here and save you hereafter.

Others were troubled by more real problems. His answers to these real life situations reveal a heart in touch with both God and man. His counsel to parents of a delinquent son is tempered by some good, common sense. He writes part of his letter¹ to the parents and part to the boy. His words to the husband and wife were calculated to induce a little soul searching: "In the first place, I shall direct my words to you and your Wife, and pray you to consider your wayes, and search and try your Hearts, and see whether God hath not laid this affliction on your Child for the Parents sins." He appeals to the noblest and best in the boy and suggests to him five truths to continually turn over in his mind:

- (1) Satan is a Conquered, a Chained Enemy.
- (2) By slavish fear you do him too much honour.
- (3) You wrong God and Christ, as if they were not able to save you.
- (4) Call to mind Gods gracious Attributes, Providences, Promises.
- (5) Your relation to God and Christ, to whom in Baptism you were devoted; and so are a Member of Christ, one of Gods Children, whom he loves, pityeth and careth for.

In a letter to a husband whose wife had just miscarried, he shows a remarkable insight into the nature of depression and despondency.² He urges the man to consider the effect that the "neglect of family prayer"

2. Porter, op. cit., p. 91f. Losco. February 21, 1679.
 1. Ibid., pp. 74-77. March 30, 1680.

has had on his wife. To Hieron, it is clear that it is this neglect "which troubles M" and "the grief of it the cause of her miscarriage."

There are also letters to those whose troubles are obvious to all but themselves. He reminds a magistrate, who has dealt exceptionally harshly with some of the ejected clergy, that a greater judge is yet to pass sentence. "But seriously Sir," he writes, "do you think, that when God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ shall come to judge the quick and dead, that he will approve those Judges, or Justice that passe Sentences and give our warrents to spoil Ministers, and Christians of their goods for preaching, praying, or hearing Sermons?"¹ He writes to the town drunk, having heard many "evil reports of his lewd and ungodly course of Life", this exhortation: "Abandon the Alehouse and all wicked company, set up Religion in your Family, pray not only once on a Sabbath day, (I marvel where you learnt that) but every day morning and night; and break off all your sins by Repentance, and pray for a new heart."²

With all, his last recourse was always to direct them to the Bible; his final word was to point them to Christ. Listen to this conclusion to one of his letters:³

But I may save further labour, and indeed might have spared this pain; for you have a Book by you, which contains all that I now write, and much more to the same purpose. The scope and substance of it is to clear up and comfort poor Souls, that walk sad and sorrowful; when they have no cause but to rejoyce and serve the Lord with gladness; in which kind of service the Lord is well pleased. I pray you peruse it, and read it through, till you have got your Heart into a joyful frame.

Our second letter writer is George Trosse (1631-1713). After graduating from Oxford, he went to the West country and ministered among

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1. Porter, op. cit., p. 69.
 2. Ibid. p. 73.
 3. Ibid., p. 60.

the folk of Exeter and Devon for the remaining forty-five years of his life. He, too,¹

had an excellent Faculty in resolving Doubts, and comforting Afflicted Consciences, by the Comfort wherewith he himself had been Comforted of God (II Cor. 1.4). Multitudes, both in the City and country...made their Application to him, some by Letter, some in Person. He was a skilful, and compassionate Spiritual Physician, of long Experience: And there were few of any Degree or Perswasion that liv'd near him, who did not send, or come to him for Advice and Help, if they had wounded Spirits, or suffer'd God's Terrors. I am perswaded, few Ministers were more consulted in such cases then he: And God was pleas'd to make him an Instrument of satisfying and comforting many Melancholy, Dejected, and Tempted People.

Of his fifteen letters still preserved, over half of them were sent to resolve the disturbed and trouble.²

To a woman feeling guilty about her removal from the unhealthy atmosphere of Exeter city, and so also from Trosse's ministry, he reassuringly writes:³

I see no Ground, either in Reason or Religion; not in Reason, because that directs to Self-preservation, to a flight from all Dangers, either of the Health, or Life of the Body, and so does Religion also, as long as such an Escape from Dangers may be without any Sin against God, or any greater Detriment to others, which in your case I can't discern....You have exchanged one place for another, an infected City, for a healthy country air, where you may serve your God with less Fear and Trouble than here....I know no Command you have broken hereby, and consequently no Sin that you have committed herein.

His counsel to a mother determined to enter the then infected city of Exeter in order to visit her sick daughter is just as wise:⁴

my advice is, seeing it can be no Benefit to your Daughter, but it will be a needless Trouble, and unwarrantable Danger to yourself, and may be an irreparable Prejudice to your other children, that you would not think of coming to Exeter to see her. As for any Case of Conscience herein, I see none...for those very Persons...

1. Isaac Gilling, The Life of the Reverend Mr. George Trosse, p. 60f.

2. Loc. cit., pp. 149-186.

3. Ibid., Letter IV, p. 155f.

4. Ibid., Letter VIII, p. 162f. Exon., The 7th of Dec. 1683.

with whom you could...leave her while in Health,,are altogether as fit, as able, as willing for the same Trust now in her Sickness, which, I am sure you can't doubt of. And therefore, seeing you can do no good by your Presence, but only shed a helpless Tear over your Child, and go home with more Trouble than you came out, and fear, lest you should carry some Infection home to your Four Children, I repeat my advice, and make it my Request, that you would not now come to Town, but at home improve your Interest with God by fervent Prayers for her.

To a man troubled in general about his "Spiritual and Eternal Welfare", and in particular about "Defects in a godly and holy walking" and a "Fear of Death", he sends a lengthy letter.¹ In it, he shows a rare insight into human nature. He diagnoses his complaints as spiritual growing pains and his fear of death as a natural dread shared by David and Hezekiah along with all other men. To overcome this despondency, the pastor suggests that he use his "retired and secret Hours" for prayer, Bible reading, and self examination.

His answer to a friend haunted by a covetous nature is quite practical. After a listing of the man's charity and a denial of his covetousness, he concluded with this practical test: "If you relieve those whom you know to be Necessitous, if you supply the Wants of those whom Providence presents to you as such, which was the Practice of the most pious and charitable Saints; I believe you have fully discharg'd your Duty in this Paricular."²

With Trosse we acknowledge that 'tis time to take Pen from Paper, and to conclude these tedious Lines."³ These later Puritan letter writers, pouring out to the disturbed, troubled and bereaved, the wisdom of their minds, the counsel of their hearts and the truth of the Bible, evidence that deep concern for individuals and congregations which was so evident among the earlier ones. This concern, which

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1. Gilling, op. cit., Letter X, pp. 166-171.
 2. Ibid., Letter XII, p. 176.
 3. Gilling, op. cit., Letter XV, p. 186.

neither ejection nor prison diminished, is surely one of the great hallmarks of the Puritan cure of souls.

Summary

The Puritan clergy and laity of the seventeenth century showed a keen interest in pastoral letter writing. Pastors used it as an effective instrument for ministering to individuals, and the laity imitated the style and content of noted pastors in their personal correspondence. Their letters reveal that they had a universal concern for mankind, saint as well as sinner, and were fired by a passion for souls. If there is a weakness to this epistolary art, it is to be found in the times which rejected Puritanism and "The Call to the Unconverted"; and if there is any strength, it is the solid foundation of the New Testament whose vocabulary and thought provide the words and inspiration for so many of their letters.

CHAPTER VII

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF RICHARD BAXTER

Introduction

One of the oddities of Puritan study is that the letters of Richard Baxter have never been published; this¹ despite the fact that many writers, past and present, have recognised their importance. Baxter included his "Multitude of Theological Letters" among his "Manuscripts that are yet unprinted;"¹ which Nuttall² takes to be as "an indication of the seriousness with which he regarded his correspondence." He entrusted them, along with other manuscripts, to his good friend Matthew Sylvester, who fully intended their publication.³ Instead they were deposited in the Dr. Williams's Library where they have rested ever since; they make up the greater part of what is officially designated as Manuscript Baxter. William Orme, nineteenth century editor of Baxter's Works, made use of them and concluded: "I feel satisfied that a volume or two of very interesting letters might be furnished from them."⁴ It remained until this century, however, before anyone began the task. F.J. Powicke, during the twenties, regularly contributed articles to the Bulletin of The John Rylands Library on Baxteriana; several of these are in the nature of extracts from Manuscript Baxter and other sources.⁵ He, also, devoted special sections to Baxter's correspondence in his two studies, Life of

1. R.B., i, 123.

2. Geoffrey F. Nuttall, "Richard Baxter's Correspondence; a preliminary survey," The Journal of Ecclesiastical History, Vol. I p. 35.

3. R.B., Preface.

4. Works, I, 245.

5. For a complete list of these articles consult the index to the Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, Vol. 25.

The Reverend Richard Baxter and The Reverend Richard Baxter Under The Cross.

Matthews made extensive use of Manuscript Baxter in his revision of Calamy. More recently, Geoffrey F. Nuttall has made "a preliminary survey of the correspondence,"¹ involving all extant letters; and has announced, as late as 1956, that he is still "at work" on the manuscripts.²

Despite his long acquaintance with these manuscripts, Nuttall,³ a decade ago, confessed: "Baxter's correspondence is a considerable body of material. The greater part of it as yet but little known." It is the purpose of this chapter, which claims to be a new approach to the letters, to throw additional light on the correspondence. Powicke's "approach", writes Nuttall,⁴ "is always by way of the correspondents;" while his own paper "is the first endeavour to give even a preliminary survey of the correspondence." This chapter is the first attempt, so far as is known, to view the correspondence in terms of problems presented and solutions offered. This is then not a study of the entire Manuscript Baxter, or even of all the letters in it, but only of those which sought advice, counsel or help, along with their corresponding answers.⁵

Though it is difficult to classify such diverse material, I have, for the sake of convenience, divided the letters into seven categories. They are not mutually exclusive and tend at times to overlap. Within several categories, there are further sub-divisions. I have chosen to treat the categories and their sub-divisions in the following order.

1. Nuttall, op. cit.

2. Visible Saints, Forward

3. "Richard Baxter's Correspondence: a preliminary survey, p.95."

4. Ibid. p. 87

5. There is not an answer to every letter. Because, as Baxter writes to Sir Francis Nethersole, "it was his habit never to take a copy of any letter of his to others except theological letters to his brethren." MSS Baxter, VI, 236.

(1) Correspondence about various problems connected with study and scholarship: (a) letters requesting financial help; (b) letters asking advice about study habits and building-up a library; and (c) letters from authors.

(2) Correspondence touching upon some problems of the ministry: (a) choosing a vocation; (b) the necessity of ordination; (c) accepting a call; and (d) conforming.

(3) Correspondence with the melancholy.

(4) Correspondence about the ordinances: (a) baptism; (b) the Lord's Supper; and (c) marriage.

(5) Correspondence about doctrinal questions.

(6) Correspondence about ecclesiastical matters: (a) church attendance, (b) rights of laity and clergy, and (c) church union.

(7) Disciplinary letters written by Baxter.

Problems connected with Study and Scholarship

Students, young and old, from Cambridge and Oxford, lay and clerical, wrote to Baxter. One was the very familiar Thomas Doolittle.¹ He was a Kidderminster lad who had been converted under Baxter's preaching of the Saint's Everlasting Rest.² Calamy³ writes that Doolittle's determination to enter the ministry received Baxter's encouragement; but it was much more than mere encouragement that he gave him, as Doolittle's letter testifies.⁴

1. See C.R. and D.N.B. for an account of his life.

2. The title page of the Ninth Edition, 1662, reads: "Written by the author for his own use in the time of his languishing, when God took him off from all Publicke Employment; but afterwards Preached in his weekly Lecture."

3. Cf. Palmer, Nonconformist Memorial. I. 80.

4. MSS Baxter, VI, 128. November 12, 1652. Powicke was obviously unfamiliar with this letter because he finds Calamy's statement improbable.

He writes to inform his pastor that he is about to take his B.A. degree and requests, if possible, that he continue to aid him financially by allowing two pounds per quarter for another year. A meagre sum by present bursary standards, but a full ten percent of Baxter's income.¹ He gladly shared what he had with this Cambridge scholar and at the same time undertook to send another Kidderminster youth, Joseph Read,² and others to university.³ Baxter's giving was vicarious in the true sense of the word. He had no formal university training himself;⁴ a fact which he sadly lamented;⁵ and so by helping Doolittle, Read, and others, he too went up to Cambridge. No tithe was more usefully spent; for during the Restoration years Doolittle's "Islington Academy" was one of the famous nonconformist's schools, boasting such scholarly graduates as Edmund Calamy and Matthew Henry.⁶

Baxter's charity was well known and prompted others to recommend worthy young men to him. Michael Edge sent him a young man with the following note:⁷

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1. He was allowed "but Eighty pounds per Annum, or Ninety at most, and House-rent for a few Rooms in the top of another man's house." R.B., ii, 79.
 2. R.B., iii, 93.
 3. In the "Epistle Dedicatory" to (The Right Method for a Settled Peace of Conscience) Works, IX, Baxter indicates that he received considerable help in this work. He writes: "When I only told you of my intention, of sending some poor scholars to the university, you freely and jointly offered your considerable annual allowance thereto..." These words are addressed to Colonel John Bridges, Mrs Margaret Bridges, Mr Thomas Foley and Mrs Anne Foley.
 4. "When I was ready for the university my Master drew me into another way which kept me thence, where were my vehement desires," R.B., i, 4.
 5. Baxter confessed to Dr Earl, Dean of Westminster Abbey, that he had refused to wear a Tippet or gown not because of a scruple, but because "I had no Degrees." R.B., ii, 32.
 6. In his diary, Philip Henry writes of the placing of his son in Doolittle's academy: "Mr Baxter told me, I could not have plac'd him better." Diaries and Letters, ed. Matthew Henry Lee p. 291.
 7. MSS Baxter, IV, 65.

S^r The bearer hereof hath a desire to be a scholar, & to be fitted for the university; and to be assisted with maintenance there: his inclination deserves encouragement in this time of the churches need. To this end he makes his addresses to you. I am desired to write to you in his behalfe: I doubt not but I may recommend him to you as a fit object of assistance: & I need not entreat you to doe for him what you can, knowing yo^r readines to such pious worke.

Most students craved help of a less tangible kind; they sought advice how to form right study habits and build-up a library. Matthew Mead is a case in point. When this celebrated Congregationalist died at the age of seventy, Howe, in his funeral address, praised him for his "ingenious education".¹ Little, perhaps, did he know that his education owed its stimulus to Baxter. As a young pastor,² "who came to early from Cambridge not staying there to take one degree," Mead made this request of the Kidderminster pastor: "Now Sir that which I earnestly beg of you is that you would please to direct and counsell mee for the method of my studys." He was not without training; "the latine greek and Hebrew I have a competent share of;" or money, "I blesse god I have enough to furnish my selfe with books had I advice about them;" but, and here was his deficiency, "it is very little either of philosophy or divinity that ever I read." Baxter's answer is wanting, though we can be sure it was not to Mead.

Another example is On. Sedgewicke.³ He was a layman who wrote to Baxter during the latter's residency in Acton. His letter is badly discoloured along the right edge but only a few words of

1. The Works of John Howe, ed. John Hunt, III, 493.

2. MSS Baxter, V, 59.

3. I am unable to identify Sedgewicke.

each line are lost.¹ He desired to know:

What course you advise a Willing (yet inferme, dark & confussed) soul who would much & doo equally, or more in a little Time. Relating to the chiefe Good - and main interest of his Soul...as to his choice /and/ converse with bookes & persons.../to/ be soonest filled to serve profitably his family, and to entertaine & solace himselfe. I add but this His body is not strong and his Trade necessarily takes up much of his Time.

Baxter sent him a "few directions" and suggested some books.²

Had Sedgewicke been a "student who intended the ministry a great deale more must have been said." What was said seems more than adequate:

- (1) Let the knowledge & improvment of y^e plaine & common catechisicall verities be yo^r very Religion, & y^e matter of yo^r meditation & conscience.
- (2) Three things you must study for y^e improvment of these truths. (a) The grounds & evidences of them in those books y^t will prove y^e Christian Religion: (b) The Method of y^m in some one body or School of Divinity: (c) The practice of them, by Directoryes & other holy Treatises, & especially by use or practice itself.
- (3) It is not too many of bookes or of good company that is most profitable.
- (4) Study Christ & God & Heaven....
- (5) Yet refuse not any other subordinate verities....
- (6) Make use of some truly able Pastor who in doctrine conjoyneth cleare application to regular & heavenly affections in the application. And whose judgement is fit to resolve all yo^r (ordinary) doubts, & helpe you out in particular cases when you are at any losse.
- (7) Doe all that you do in the world as Gods service, for his ends & in obedience to him.
- (8) Keep off from temptation to all sensuality, pride & worldynes, & every flesh pleasing way.

He hesitates to recommend any books because "it seemeth too much arrogance to preferre one mans before all others." But there are three which he considers to be particularly valuable, especially if read over "more than once at least." They are: Ursines,

1. MSS Baxter, II, 5. August 1, 16??
 2. MSS Baxter, II, 7. August 7, 1667.

Catechisme, and Ames, Marrow of Divinity and Conscience With The Power and Cases Thereof.

Five years later, Thomas Jackson¹ wrote² requesting "the returne of a few lines, & that therein you would sett downe the names of such bookes as you think most suitable to the condition of prisoners & most beneficial for them. That they might be added to some of yo^r books which we have gotten already."³ He also made a special request: "that you would bestow yo^r Sainte Rest, & some other of yo^r most awakening books on the prison at Shrewsbury." Undoubtedly, it was repeated requests such as this that caused Baxter to go over his own library and prepare a list of recommended books and publish the same.⁴

Authors were his correspondents, too. Shortly after the publication of his book, Ministration of, and Communion with Angels (1661), Isaac Ambrose sent Baxter a note.⁵ He had quoted Baxter in defence of his own position and several "learned brothers" had expressed objections to the passage, which was a clear defence of what Baxter called "angels-ministration." Therefore, in order to silence his critics, Ambrose "resolved to make so bold...to desire your paynes for yo^r best proofes, whether topicke, or demonstrative, of yo^r tenet."

Baxter sent his answer a week later.⁶ It did not contain,

1. A member of Worcestershire Association and listed by William Urwick, Nonconformity in Worcester, p. 168, as minister in Burrough (i.e. Berrow), 1650.
2. MSS Baxter, I, 131. June 14, 1673.
3. The Earl of Lauderdale, while a political prisoner, was greatly enriched by Baxter's books. R.B., I, 121.
4. The list is to be found in (A Christian Directory), Works, V, 587ff
5. MSS Baxter, VI, 16. November 22, 1661.
6. Baxter's answer is wanting from MSS Baxter but fortunately it has been preserved by Ambrose in an appendix to the above mentioned work (p. 587).

because of some "unavoidable avocations," the desired scripture proofs; but it did "take notice of the state of the controversy." Through the use of Scripture, doctrine and argument he ably defended his tenet. Ambrose was well pleased with it and felt it able "to stop the mouths of all gainsayers."¹

Another author found among the correspondents is Joseph Glanvil. Powicke writes: "he attached himself to Baxter with all the ardour of a young hero-worshipper. While yet an undergraduate at Oxford, he travelled to Kidderminster to hear him preach and to obtain a personal interview."² Knowing this it doesn't seem strange to find him sending Baxter a copy of his recently published Lux Orientalis (1662), upon which, he fears, "very likely the world will passe a very severe judgment on."³ From Baxter he expected "the exercise of candor & ingenuity; especially," he reminds him, "since this bold attempt of mine is in a manner the Product of yo^r own instruction."⁴ It is a genuine tribute to Baxter that men expected from him both honest criticism and Christian charity. There is, unfortunately, no surviving record that Glanvil received such, but we can safely assume that he did.

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1. Ambrose, Ministration of, . . . , p. 582.
 2. Powicke, The Rev. Richard Baxter Under the Cross, p. 49.
 3. Lux Orientalis, sets forth Glanvil's ideas concerning "praeexistence": "Therefore it was the opinion of the Indian Brachmans, the Persian Magi, the Egyptian Gymnosophits, the Jewish Rabbins, some of the Graecian Philosophers, and Christian Fathers, that the souls of men were created all at first; and at several times and occasions upon forfeiture of their better life and condition dropt down into these terrestrial bodies." (p. 26).
 4. MSS Baxter, I, 174. Prior to the sending of this book, Glanvil attempted, unsuccessfully, to discuss the subject of "pre-existence" with Baxter. He wrote: "When I was at London I would have desired yo^r thoughts of Preexistence. If your occasions will permitt, I shall make bold to second the request of my former unanswered Letter about it." Baxter had written but the letter miscarried. MSS Baxter, I, 170-173.

Problems of the Ministry

The Puritan disavowal of the office of bishop posed some difficulties not at first apparent. One of these, was the removal from the Church of a whole group of "father confessors" to whom ministers, especially the younger ones, could turn for guidance and help. It was inevitable, therefore, that in a non-episcopal society, such as the Commonwealth, some men should be elevated to the stature of bishop. Such was the case with Richard Baxter.

A university companion of Thomas Doolittle, having gone up to Cambridge "in 49", just a year after Doolittle, wrote admitting some doubts about his "Call to Ministry."¹ In troubling Baxter he owned that his letter "will not Require much-time to read." It is very brief and goes immediately to the heart of the matter: "I Question my Call to Ministry. But I do not Question my state of grace....I have sometimes had Resolutions to marry, but for my youth, & my incompetent meanes for maintenance of wife & children... I would save have your Counsell in these...as to my Ministry, Marrying, & getting out of this sin & into Christ." He also suggested that his letter would take "as little to answer" as to read, but if Baxter answered it he retained no copy of his reply.

Two letters from Cambridge students have been noted; now it is Oxford's turn. Edward Jeffrey, B.A. and Fellow Commoner of Exeter College, wrote toward the close of the Kidderminster ministry

1. MSS Baxter, V, 62. July 18, 1655. This letter bears no signature.

proposing a case of conscience and a related question.¹ The letter begins: "Though I am a stranger to your Person, yet not to your works;" which his amusing postscript bears out: "Two dayes agoe² a Quaker went naked from one end of y^e Towne to the other." Despite his unfamiliarity with Baxter he does know of his "readiness to satisfy the just proposals of others" and therefore feels free to propose "1st a case of conscience; viz: Whether the Inclinations of a son be more to be respected in y^e choice of a calling, than y^e will of Parents?" His conflict is obvious from his hypothetical case: "Suppose the Parents to be fore y^e Law, Civil or Common; And y^e son for Divinity". His related question further indicates his side of the case: "whether knowledge (the end of Travail) may be better attain'd by him y^t intends Divinity, here at home, yⁿ in Transmarine universities"? In case Baxter's answer to the question of foreign study be in the negative, Jeffreys further inquires: "whether it be better for such a one to travell, or no"?

Jeffreys's problem is so contemporary that one almost rejoices upon turning up an answer. It was sent just one week after Jeffreys posted his letter.³ As regards the case of

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1. MSS. Baxter, III, 33. July 30, 1659.
 2. At this time Baxter wrote several polemics against the Quakers (see A.G. Matthews, Works of Richard Baxter, for a complete list), who he thought were inspired by Rome (R.B., i, 77). It is to his credit, though, that toward the end of his life he moderated this opinion (cf. Powicke, The Life of the Rev. Richard Baxter). For an account of this phase of Quakerism cf. Braithwaite, The Beginning of Quakerism, pp. 148-151.
 3. MSS. Baxter, III, 35.

conscience all Baxter can offer are a few propositions "which may be usefull toward your owne resolving of the case, who know the circumstances." The propositions are rather slanted with the order of emphasis being, first, the importance of the ministry; secondly, the obligation owed to parents;¹ and finally, the feelings of the son:

- (1) If y^e difference be but about common vocations, as Law, Physicks etc. it becomes not a son to contend much with his ffather.
- (2) If the son be averse from the calling of the ministry through impiety, & the father would put him on, the father is bound to forbear, till he see more grace in him, & the son is at once bound to turne to God.
- (3) If a son be averse from the ministry through a true sense of inefficiency, he ought not to yield to a father that would drive him on.
- (4) If a son be desirous of the ministry through a false conceit that he is fit, or like to be so, he is bound to yield to the contradicting judgment of his ffather.
- (5) If a son that is like to be very usefull in the ministry desire it...& he is not like to be neere so usefull to the Church of God in another calling, then he may & must resist his ffather's will that would prohibit it.
- (6) But in case the opposition if exerted would be so violent, as that by scandall, disinheriting or the like, it would take his usefulness, it may turne the scales & cause him to submit to their judgment.
- (7) Therefore you must lay all circumstances together, & discerne which way you are likely to serve him best.

Baxter is more definite about foreign study and student travel.²

"To your questions about travelling," he continues, "I answer":

- (1) To a settled resolved man long travails may be profitable, but his studies of Rome may be more profitable & safe.
- (2) To one intended for magistracy, a short view of FFrance, Venice, Constantinople etc. may be usefull if he be a settled Godly man, & have settled carefull guides & company...And yet I thinke that even to such, it is the safest way &

1. Schlatter, The Social Ideas of Religious Leaders, p. 31, states that in the seventeenth century "no one doubted the right of father and mother to control the lives of children."

2. Another Puritan pastor, George Trosse, having himself travelled abroad as a young man, "afterwards cautioned parents against sending their children abroad too young." Cf Palmer op.cit., T.46

of surest gaine, to study at home.

- (3) Unless it were only a short triall in safe company, at Leyden, Geneva, Zurick, or Basil, I thinke all travaile to a man intending for the ministry is likest to prove to his losse & hurt. And I thinke...a man...may get as much in England as any where to furnish himselfe for the worke that he hath here to do.

Baxter did recognise one valid reason for divinity students travelling: to learn a foreign language, particularly "ffrence or Dutch". They would then be equipped to "preach or discourse in other partes, if times should grow so calamitous as to force us out of our native country;" or be able "to attend an Embassadour, or preach to any company of Merchants, & seeke a probability of doing God more service y^t way then at home."

Jeffreys, apparently, entered law and not divinity;¹ but whether this was due to Baxter's letter is a moot question. One can easily imagine that it was. His prohibition of foreign travel, his exalted view of the ministry, and his recognition of parental authority might easily have turned this confused young man from his own ambitions to the wishes of his father; but, of course, this is only conjecture.

With the advent of the Commonwealth and the rise of the sectaries, the question of ordination became an important one; its necessity and validity was often challenged. There

1. Wood lists an Edm. Jeffryes as receipient of the degree of Doctor of Civil Law on December 20, 1670. Charles E. Mallet, in A History of the University of Oxford, p. 325, states that between seven and nine years were required to obtain both the Bachelor of Civil Law and the Doctorate, which is about the amount of time which elapsed between Jeffreys's letter and his receiving of the degree of Doctor of Civil Law.

should be no surprise then that Baxter was consulted on this issue, too; what is surprising, though, is to find him being looked to as a final authority by two men of opposite opinions.

It all began with a letter from a London minister Thomas Willes,¹ describing a Monday lecture he shared with a minister of the Congregational way:²

Having an alternate course in a Lecture here in the City, upon some speciall Reasons I have asserted the outward Call to the Ministry, in an Ordinary Way & Case, to be Regularly by Ordination. The other Lecturer, having openly disclaimed his Ordination he had once received, gave in sundry arguments directly against it; as viz: that there is no such Justification: Tis from popish practice, to the great offense of y^e Ministry in this city, & y^e most sober Christians. When I had in my next turne answered his Arguments, he flyes to humane Testimonie. And this very Night he produces in the Face of a very full Congregation yo^r 2 sheets for the Ministry³ & openly reades severall Propositions for the Justification of his opinion. The Principall place was y^e 7th obj. in y^e first sheet, y^t Soulders & such like may be constant & ordinary Preachers.

The reader can easily imagine what Willes desired of Baxter: "One Word from you will resolve y^e Question, & give much satisfaction to many hundreds to whom your Name is precious. I earnestly beg this Favour of you with all speed; for the next Monday I must give in my Reply in the same place." To insure that Baxter understood the question under discussion,

1. Cf. C.R. for life.
2. MSS. Baxter, I, 230. December 14, 1657.
3. The two sheets are: One sheet for the ministry, against the malignants of all sorts (1657), A second sheet for the ministry (1657). In R.B., I, 117, Baxter describes the first sheet as "containing those Reasons for the present Ministry which shew the greatness of the Sin of those that set against them. It was intended then against the Quakers and other Sectarian Enemies to the Ministry." The second sheet was "a Defense of their Office as continued, against the Seekers, who pretend that the Ministry is ceased and lost."

Willes, in concluding his letter, restated it again: "Whether it is your Judgm^t that gifted Brethren, never ordained to the Worke of the Ministry, may ordinarily preach y^e Gospel, in publick Assemblyes, as the case now stands with us in England, there being abundant supply of ordained Ministers, I adde, without the approbation or consent of these Ministers, yea to their Offence."

Baxter, upon receiving Willes's letter, dispatched an immediate reply.¹ He marveled that "any wise & good man should deny ordination to be a duty;" for had not "honored Calvin consent to call ordination a 3rd Sacrament." He lamented the "hard measure y^t these words [of his "7th object"] have met with."² His intent was not "to dishonor y^e Proceeding of y^e Approvers & y^e Comissioners y^mselves, by saying y^t some of you are Soldiers" but to deny the oft repeated charge made against the clergy that they were "hinderinge all but [themselves] from y^e improvinge of their gifts." He believed in equality of opportunity. He believed, also, in the necessity of ordination. He answers Willes's specific question in this way:

It is my Judgm^t y^t though probationers & other unordained men may occasionally Preach in publicke, under y^e direction of y^e Pastors of y^e churches, & may frequently

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1. MSS Baxter, I, 237. December 17, 1657.
 2. Willes called it the "7th obj." but Baxter points out that it is actually "object 5".

Preach in Publicke in cases of Necessity; yet wⁿ there is no such necessity, but there is a competent supply of able ordained ministers, & wⁿ y^e Pastors of y^e Churches approve not of their preachings, I thinke it presumption & disorder, & a sin...for such men to undertake to be y^e ordinary teachers of a Christian Assembly.

Having written this reply one can easily imagine that Baxter assumed that this was the end of the matter; but it was not. Both men sent replies on the same day. Willes wrote in a commendatory tone:¹

Worthy Sir

Your Letter came very seasonably to my hands & did fully serve my Expectations & desires & gave abundant Satisfaction to very many both Ministers of this city & Christians. And truly Sr it did in all Points so fully accord to that Doctrine I had delivered, that I cannot but looke upon it as a singular Providence.

After posting this letter, Willes heard that Brooks was going to write Baxter, too; so he hastily dashed off a second note.² He warns Baxter "of a designe to draw something from you that may at least in show give some Countenance to the contrary cause." It is evident from this second letter that Willes is apprehensive about the impact of Brooks's letter upon Baxter. He attempts to discredit him, labeling him as a user of "false English"; further, he corrects "two things I was Mistaken in," obviously feeling guilty about the way in which he slanted the facts of the discussion.

Brooks's letter came claiming that Willes "has not fairly presented things to you."³ The facts, as Brooks saw them, were

1. MSS. Baxter, I, 234. December 24, 1657.
2. MSS. Baxter, I, 235. December 24, 1657.
3. MSS. Baxter, I. 232. December 24, 1657. Upon receiving this letter Baxter learned, for the first time, the name of Willes's opponent.

these:

S^r, Mr. Willes was pleased to lye such a stres upon ordination as to affirme 1. that it was a sin for any unordained man ordinarily to preach....2. a sin for people to heare such....I declare my Judgement for ordination according to the congregational way. I being so ordained after an ordination y^t I had before and upon this last ordination I now stand and act in my place according to my measure.

In order to satisfy himself that Willes "has not fairly presented things", he requested Baxter to send him a copy of his antagonist's letter.

Baxter made only one reply to the three letters; he returned nothing to Willes, for nothing more needed to be said. In writing Brooks he expresses some surprise that he is Willes's opponent.¹ He denies his request for a copy of the letter, just as he would have denied the same request from Willes. He confesses to this young London minister that his real motive for insisting upon ordination is neither theological or doctrinal, but practical. It is the one sure means of keeping the "abundance of Ignorant, unhumbled, unable novices, y^t understand not y^e catechisms" from going forth and preaching. After examining, again, the letters of both men, he cannot help but feel that they are really more in agreement then disagreement and therefore urges Brooks:

I could wish you would lovingly (& presently) goe to him & conferre & pray yourselves into this much unity, as to draw up in one sheet or less, your common agreements about ordination, & agt y^e intrusion of y^e unworthy, & publish

1 MSS. Baxter, I, 239. January 2, 1657/8.

y^t with both your hands subscribed....I have not mentioned such a thing to him; but if you will take y^e honour of seekinge peace, & tell him y^t I made this motion, I thinke he will yield....Its strange to me y^t I should be agreed wth you both, as you both say I am, & yet y^t you cannot so farre agree wth one another.

Henry Hickman,¹ a Worcestershire man by birth, but at the time of his writing to Baxter a minister in Oxford, also requested guidance about ordination.² His needs were even more academic than Willes and Brooks. He had been chosen from among the Oxford clergy to answer the doctors in vesperii and proposes the question whether the ministry of the Anglican church has valid ordination. He hopes that Baxter will be able to recommend "any books that will be worth while my reading in the forenamed controversies."

This was only part of the letter; the first part deals with an even more important issue: "the importunate sollicitations from the good people of Newington." He had twice put them off, but they continued to extend a call. Finally, he resolved his dilemma by promising his Oxford congregation that he would remain if they could "in a worthy time settle a maintenance upon mee." If they cannot, he writes, "they have given mee liberty to go as God shall direct mee."

Baxter's reply is short and to the point.³ "About y^e abode

1. Cf. C.R. for life.

2. MSS Baxter, I. 266. May 22, 1657.

3. MSS Baxter, I, 267. May 28, 1657.

at Oxford I shall presume to say no more, because you have so much advice at hand: Onely y^t I am not satisfyed, y^t you cast the busynes upon matters of maintenance & y^t in y^e eye of so many observers. If you are like to doe God as much service at London, yⁿ theres no more to be said; but if not, serve him though your pay be short. It may be as much as Pauls."

One of the most frequent of clerical correspondents was Abraham Pinchbecke. In 1659, while serving as assistant to Thomas Manton at St. Paul's, Covent Garden, he received a call; but before accepting or rejecting it, he turned for advice to Baxter:¹

Sr I am petitioned for by the inhabitants of Mashbury in Essex to be there minister....I desire therefore first your hearty prayers that God would make me wise & faithful & blessed & then your wisest counsell how I should carry myselfe so as to be able most effectually to win souls to God & Christ & to settle a church discipline & to joyn in an association or anything else that may bring glory to God & in both these I desire you if you have more & would have more doe any good not to faile mee".

Baxter's answer is wanting; there undoubtedly was one, for he answers most of Pinchbecke's letters. We might well infer that his reply was a discouraging one. For despite his determination to accept this call, he remained at St. Paul's until the Restoration when he was ejected.²

Another seeking advice about a call was Baxter's faithful friend of later years, Matthew Sylvester.³ During the

1. MSS. Baxter, V, 49. April 22, 1659.

2. Cf. C.R.

3. MSS. Baxter, I. 176. July 30, 1672. Cf. C.R. for life. Matthews states that he was "licensed as of Coleman Street, London, 13 April 1672.

indulgence year of 1672, he writes: "Mr Chishul's people have all (as farre as I can understand) invited mee to spend my paines amongst them." It was an inviting call because "the place beinge neare the temple," he had a "faire advantage...to reach the hts [hearts] of Students there." It required dividing his time and energies: "Mr Flennes is willinge to take up with my paines in the afternoons only, at his house; and gives mee liberty for White Fryers in the morninge, where with they are contented; provided that I either provide for them by another at 2 of the clock in y^e afternoone, or preach myselfe after 4." He turns to his friend in this matter because, as he puts it: "I greatly desire to know the mind of God, in this (as all) offices to whom I am accountable both for miscarriage & mistakes. And heere I humbly judge tis meete I stay in London, but am not too presumptory and resolved to yield to better arguments & judgements in the case." He concludes: "Deare Sr, compleat your kindesse by layine mee upon your ht [heart] & in your thoughts when they be nearest heaven; & entreat for mee, that I may be enabled to answer the expectations & obligations that are upon mee from God & man." There is no record of a reply.

One other problem to be treated here is the one which the entire Puritan clergy had to face on St. Bartholemew's Day, 1662. Baxter, for reasons of conscience, refused to conform; others did not; still others refused at first but then later conformed. Mr. Eccleston of Sturbridge was one of these latter; he finally conformed sometime before July 9, 1673.¹ The two men personally

1. The date of Baxter's letter.

discussed the matter, and, at the time, Baxter was going to ask him "y^e Argumente y^t satisfied" him; but he "thought it would seeme a reprehension rather & be ungratefull" and so he forbore. Yet, after Eccleston left his house, he became the more curious; not, I am sure, out of a morbid sense of curiosity, but because he himself was still vexed over the question. He had a high regard for this recent conformist, he "being so ingenious a person," who "would not venture without some considerable reasons;" and, therefore, solicited by Post his reasons for conforming. His letter also contained "a few words of advice for y^e future."¹

His "advice" is an excellent charge to a pastor revealing what the Puritans considered to be the weaknesses of the Anglican pastoral ministry:

- (1) That you will preach Catechisticall necessary truth wth all possible plainesse & seriousness.
- (2) That you will be very much in private conference with y^e vulgar of your parish, about their knowledge, & y^e state of their soules and shew y^t conformists are as true to their trust & as faithfull labourers for mens salvation as non conformists, by doing as much wth all families in order, by catechising & personall convincing conference, as we were want to do, & more. By w^{ch} also you will learn w^t preaching they most need.
- (3) I advise you to watch ag^t y^e common Temptation of new conformists, y^t you looke not on your selfe as having now a different party: & so to preach & judge according to y^e Interest. But know no party but Christian, nor no Interest y^t shall stand in competition wth y^t of Christ & mens soules.

Eccleston, apparently, sent no return to this firm admonition and holy advice.

Correspondence with the Melancholy

In the Reliquiae under the year 1670, Baxter writes:² "I

1. MSS Baxter, II, 200. July 9, 1673.

2. R.B., iii, 85.

was troubled this Year with multitudes of melancholly Persons, from several Parts of the Land, some of high Quality, some of low, some very exquisitely learned, some unlearned; (as I had in a great measure been above twenty years before.) I know not how it came to pass, but if men fell melancholly, I must hear from them or see them (more than any Physician I know.)" One of the first of those "of a melancholy disposition" to be heard from was Jonathan Jenner.¹ On the night of August 11, 1651, he noticed to his delight that he was staying in an "Inne the next door to Mr Baxter." This realisation brought to his mind a flood of un-resolved problems, and so he determined "not to let pas this so happy an opportunity" to consult the Kidderminster pastor. Because of his "melancholy disposition", he wrote out his "scruples" instead of presenting them in person.²

This "poor creature, made up of doubts & scruples" desired "to be satisfied" in eighteen cases. Had he been in less of a hurry or less burdened his letter would have been more logically arranged; as it stands, the "many things...which [he] earnestly desired resolution in" can be grouped under three headings: the application of the Scriptures to the Christian life, husband-wife relationship, and the nature of sin.

The questions about the husband-wife relationship,³ along with Baxter's answers are particularly interesting. Jenner asks:

(1) What difference is there among "the authority of

1. His identity is uncertain. Venn, Alumni Cantabrigienses, PT.I, Vol. II, p.469, lists a Jonathan Jenner as being admitted sizar at Trinity, June 18, 1655; M.A. 1673 (Lit. Reg.) Rector of Charlton, Kent 1676-87.
2. MSS Baxter, I, 1. August 11, 1651.
3. Schlatter, op. cit., p. 19, characterises the later seventeenth century English family as patriarchal and adds: a further requirement of the patriarchal family was that the father should have authority over the mother."

Magistrates over the people, parents their children, husbands their wives."

(2) "What an inferious is to do as to y^e use of y^e Means of Grace in case restrained or forbidden the use of them by ther superiours? as suppos an heathenish husband should forbid his Wife (suppos no Xtian as yet neither) to resort to y^e Word; whether yet not withstanding should she go if she has a mind."

(3) Whether a husband may revoke a promise granted to his wife "of liberty to chos to her own satisfaction" where she attends church?"

(4) "Whether wife or other Inferiour may faithfully expect God's extraordinary edifying them in the cases aforesaid forbearing y^e use of outward means upon y^e Account of y^e husband's or superiour's injunction."

(5) Whether a wife may complain of too many household responsibilities which keep her from communion with God.

(6) "Seeing ther is neither Male nor female in Christ whether it be lawful any usurping of Authority over y^e man to reprove the husband & admonish him for gros sins."

(7) "Whether y^e wife may pray in the Family y^e husband being present, he not forbidding."

(8) "If it be lawful for a wife to Reprove, whether she may forbear upon his injoyning her silence and to let him hav his own way the grosly evil."

Jenner was so troubled and so desirous of Baxter's resolutions that he proposed to "delay my travelling forward till about 10 of y^e clock to morrow night" hoping to "then receive your pious resolution if not of all, yet as many as conveniently by that time you can hav considered."

The letter was awaiting Baxter's return "after a journey yesterday ended, & preaching today." He felt that it demanded "a considerable volume" by way of reply; but because it was already "between nine of y^e clocke (wⁿ I received yours) & bed time" he could only spend "but one halfe houre" on it. Yet the dating, "Aug. 11 even ten a clock at night," suggests that though tired and aching he gave this soul more time than he promised or ought to have given. His final direction to Jenner suggests that not

a moment of that precious hour was wasted: "Sir in this hast I have briefly run over all your questions, & send them you on condition 1. y^t you pardon my necessitated brevity, & any false writing you find, seeing I cannot now once read y^m over. 2. y^t you send me back this copy when you have transcribed it."

Baxter's answers to the questions about the husband-wife relationship are especially interesting because, at this date, he is a bachelor.¹ He begins by noting that a wife's religious experiences may be divided into two groups, duties and religious exercises.² As regards the former, "no man hath authority to dissolve an obligation to necessary duty w^{ch} God layeth on us." Therefore, if a husband breaks his promise concerning a religious duty, it is unlawful. If a husband forbids a wife the performance of a religious duty and she acquiesces "shee must expect Gods displeasure." Obviously then, he goes on, "shee oweth him no obedience ag^t God, & therefore will reprove [his sin] though he forbid." As regards her religious exercises, the situation is different. If a husband forbids them, she must accept his authority; but she may also "expect Gods blessing." If a husband grants permission for her to perform her religious exercises, but then breaks his promise, "shee is still to be subject to his governm^t." Though Baxter would be the first to promote daily prayer and meditation, he assures Jenner that those prohibited from them because of household responsibilities may receive "greater good & more communion with God, y^t is, more blessings

1. He was married to Margaret Charlton on September 10, 1662.
2. MSS Baxter, I, 2. August 11, 1651.

from him, though lesse thought on." Even prayer may be a sin, he testifies, as when a souldier shuns the battlefield for the chapel. The wife, he concludes, may lead in family prayer; but only when the husband is absent.

This is basically the same teaching, on this subject, as is found in his A Christian Directory and The Poor Man's Family Book; but it apparently was not his own practice during those happy nineteen years with Margaret.¹ They were partners in their married state supremely illustrated by their devotional life: "it was not the least comfort that I had in the converse of my late dear wife that our first in the morning and last in bed at night was a Psalm of Praise till the hearing of others interrupted it."²

It is refreshing to turn up the next letter.³ It is written in the gentle handwriting of a devout woman. Its author, Mary Rogers,⁴ on occasions spent time in Kidderminster and sat under the ministry of its renowned pastor. She writes that, in the past, she had often determined to go to Baxter's study and "turne out my heart"; but it always seemed that when she was deepest "in the biternes of my soule," "the good providence of my gracious god has prevented me by putting a seasonable word into your mouth (in the publick congregation) wherewith I have been supported." This letter makes no requests, confesses no hidden fault, nor betrays any spiritual or physical sickness; it is simply a thank you note: "O how often have you resolved my doubts, and quieted my

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1. See Powicke's "A Puritan Idyll, or the Rev. Richard Baxter's Love Story," Bulletin of John Rylands Library, Vol. 4, pp. 434-464, for an account of his married life.
 2. I am indebted to Powicke, op. cit., for this quotation from Baxter's Fragments of Poetry.
 3. MSS Baxter, IV, 228. August 22, 16??
 4. Powicke, The Life of the Reverend Richard Baxter, p. 149, states that she was the wife of Colonel Rogers, Governor of Hereford.

troubled spirit." Anyone who has sought to do the same can readily understand why Baxter retained it.

Another letter,¹ bound in the same folio as the one from Mary Rogers, bears the title: "The Case of the Gentleman referred to Mr Bachster by the Lady Hollis,² at the Gentlewomans special request." Her case is truly pathetic. Lady Hollis gives this description:

Shee beinge in the first place of a timmerous and fearful disposition, and loosing divers of her children by death, contracted such a melancholy upon her, that with drew her from ussing such exercises as was requisit for her health, but at last god blessed her with a Sonne...soone upon her delivery shee apprehended sodaine death, and with all it was suggested into her minde, that shee should dye, & that shee being a great sinner, hell was open to receive her, after this shee made a promise to god, that if he would please to send her a longe life, she would spende that life accordinge to the strict rule of gods worde.

Her promise, made in good faith, turned her life into the extremist form of asceticism: "shee denies her selfe almost all things, of creature comforts." Lady Hollis requests for her that "shee desires to be satisfied what Liberty shee may use upon the Lordes day, and in what manner it ought to be kept."

Baxter's reply is two-fold.³ First, he suggests some rules for getting out of melancholy.⁴

(1) Be exercised as far as thought will beare in some businesse y^e may take up both y^e body and y^e minde.

1. MSS Baxter, IV, 116.

2. Orme, Works, I, 182N identifies her as the wife of Denzil, Lord Hollis, who was leader of the Presbyterian party during the reign of Charles I but whose enthusiasm quickly waned after the Restoration.

3. MSS Baxter, IV, 118.

4. Some of these same rules and others are to be found in Baxter's (God's Goodness Vindicated), Works, VIII, 511ff.

- (2) Let her not give way to fixed musing thoughts.
- (3) Let her not be overlonge in secret prayer or readinge.
- (4) Let her not blame her soule for y^e proper effects of her disease anymore than is cause.
- (5) Let her not give too much heed to y^e inward apprehensions of her owne heart nor lay to greate a stress upon her owne feeling and conclusions and take them to be all from God.

This therapy - get away from yourself - has a "modern" ring about it and is another example of the timeless and thoroughly New Testament teaching which the Puritans expounded and which for too long has been overlooked or neglected in their thought.

To her specific question about the Lord's Day, Baxter answers in general terms. He makes no distinction between it and the other six; nor is he prepared or willing to suggest what "Liberty shee may use", except in broad and general terms. He offers this simple rule of thumb: "Outward comforts and pleasures must be so far denyed as they by pampering of flesh tend to increase its lust and provoke us into sin....And they are so far to be used as they fit our bodys by strength to serve our soules in our generall or particular callings."

Before concluding this section, one other case of melancholy invites our attention. It is the case of "a melancholly neighbour" referred to Baxter by the Reverend Francis Fullwood.¹ The neighbour asked his pastor to write to the Kidderminster minister because he noticed that Baxter had "described his very case in the eighth page of Cases of conscience." To which Fullwood added the following information: "he is about 30 years of age, of a

1. MSS Baxter, II, 258. December 8, 1658. He was a minister in Devon.

very strong complexion;" and that "he complaines of heats about the region of his heart, & of much confusion in his apprehensions of things & of very said thoughts sometimes." Fullwood's purpose in writing is to request Baxter to give "one word or two of advice either as a Divine or Physician if your greater occasions may permit."¹

Baxter decided to answer as a physician.² His therapy is: that a patient seek a local opinion, and that he take the strong purgative which Baxter prescribes. He has little doubt about the effect: "this continued (if but 2 days a weeke) in ordinary melancholy cureth in 5 weekes; in stronger melancholy, in 7, in deepest melancholy in 12, if the patient can bear so much purging."³

Correspondence about the Ordinances

Baxter, as we have already seen, was occasionally drawn into controversy. One of his chief antagonists was John Tombes,⁴ "reputed the most Learned and able Anabaptist in England."⁵ He was a near neighbour to Kidderminster, ministering at Bewdly. Baxter had recommended him to the congregation, but later regretted it: "This was the greatest wrong that ever I knew I did to Bewdly."⁶ This change in attitude was brought about by Tombes's

1. In the Reliquiae (i, 83) Baxter writes: "I was forced five or six years by the Peoples necessity to practice Physick." As early as Perkins, the Puritans were urging that "melancholie may be cured by physicke." Works, I, 536.
2. MSS Baxter, II, 260. January 6, 1658/9. Baxter, (The Right Method for a Settled Peace of Conscience and Spiritual Comfort), Works, IX, 22, writes of the melancholy: "I would have such persons make use of some able godly physician."
3. One of his directions cited in (God's Goodness Vindicated), Works, VIII, 512, is: "In most, meet physic also will do very much, which must be ordered by an experience physician that is with them, or well knoweth them."
4. See C.R. and D.N.B., for an account of his life.
5. R.B., i, 88.
6. R.B., i, 96.

continued and open denial of infant baptism. Though Baxter's first inclination was to ignore the anabaptist, he was so continually sought by the people of Bewdly to break his silence that he finally gave in. He challenged Tombes, who reluctantly accepted, to a public debate; it came off "in Mr Tombes' Chapel" on January 1, 1650, before a packed audience.¹ Baxter, if his own account is correct, won hands down:²

And after one days Dispute with him of Bewdley, my Hearers were more settled, and the course of his Infection stopt...In a Word, this Dispute satisfied all my own People and the country that came in, and Mr Tombes' own Townsmen, except about Twenty whom he had perverted, who gathered into his Church, which never increased to above Twenty-two, that I could learn.

In the wake of this popular triumph Baxter published his Plain Scripture Proof of Infants Church-Membership and Baptism (1651), and one would have thought that Tombes had been silenced forever. Yet five years after the public debate he is again troubling his neighbour with the question. During the months of April and May, 1655, six letters pass between them. Tombes commences the correspondence, beginning where he left off five years previous:³

Not finding yet the law of ordinance of infant visible church-membership which you assert in your books of baptisme to be unrepealed, I do request you to set down the particular text or texts of holy Scripture where you conceive that law or ordinance is written, & to transmit it to me by this bearer, that your allegation may be considered by him who is,

Yours as is meete
John Tombes.

Baxter dropped his other weighty matters and penned an immediate

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1. Powicke, op. cit., devotes an entire chapter to this controversy.
 2. R.B., i, 88, 96.
 3. MSS Baxter, II, 159.

reply answering, as he thought, the two questions: "whether there were any ordinance or law of god that infants should be church members?" and "whether this bee repealed?"¹ Tombes thought the answer wholly inadequate because it did not contain the sought after "texts of holy Scripture."² Baxter, undoubtedly tired of all this triviality, and perhaps already sensing the futility of it all, wrote in his second letter,³

Sr.

If you will needes recall me to this ungrateful worke, let me request you to tell me fully, exactly & plainly, w^t transient fact you meane, w^{ch} you conceive, without Law did make church members, y^t so I may know where y^r competition lyeth. When I have yo^r meaning I intend, god willing, to send you a speedy answer to yo^r Letter.

A week later, Tombes returned a reply.⁴ The "transient fact" says he, is God's "taking of the whole people of the Jewes for his people." This accounts for the fact that all Jewish infants were claimed as church members; but, he argues, at the coming of Christ a new way was initiated which "included not infants" because none were allowed membership in the "Christian Church without repentence and faith in Christ." Sufficiently sure of the superiority of his argument, he once again presses Baxter: "having fully & plainly told you my meaning as you request, I do now expect your speedy answers to my last, & therein to fulfill my request of setting downe the particular texts of Holy Scripture."

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1. MSS Baxter, II, 140.
 2. MSS Baxter, II, 141.
 3. MSS Baxter, II, 142.
 4. MSS Baxter, II, 143.

Baxter, true to his word, sent his reply covering twenty-eight pages.¹ He said nothing except what he had already said several times over. What is of most interest in this correspondence is not Baxter's answers, but his attitude. On the one hand, he displays a willingness to revive an old controversy, painful as it must be, because it holds "a possibility of doing or receiving Good." Further, he willingly continues this correspondence even though his antagonist would time and again "fly off... & jumble things in much confusion." On the other hand, he reveals, especially in this excerpt from his last letter, that there is a limit even to his patience and forbearance:

If you have anything of moment to say in reply to these, w^{ch} you have not yet in yo^r writings brought forth, I shall be willing to consider of it: but if you have not, I pray you tell me so in two words, & spare y^e rest of yo^r paines (as for me) & trouble mee no more with matters of this nature for truly I have noe sufficient vacancy from greater workes; yea I am constrained to forbear such greater than these.

A final reply from Tombes is wanting. It was only a lull in the storm, however. Sixteen years later he again wrote Baxter attempting to revive the controversy. Baxter answered his first letter, but² ignored his succeeding one and so the matter was finally dropped.²

Others wrote Baxter about the same subject. Thomas Gouldstone, lecturer at Westminster Abbey, writes in March, 1658: "I earnestly desire you would give me your judgment

1. MSS Baxter, II, 145-158.

2. MSS Baxter II, 242. Powicke, op. cit., p. 236, missed this correspondence, for he writes: "there is no trace of any personal intercourse or contact with Tombes on Baxter's part after 1656."

concerning y^e baptizing y^e infants of all y^t desire it because you seeme to bee against it in your call to y^e unconverted
 pag: 112."¹ Three days later Abraham Pinchbecke wrote asking,
 "whether I may baptize y^e child of a pson not appearing to be a serious chtian, or whether I may baptize y^e child of a notorious wicked man."²

The Lord's Supper came in for its share of treatment, too. John Jackson³ asked about its interpretation. He was a London minister who had no acquaintance with Baxter: "you are by face unknown to me:" but like so many others this did not stop him from calling upon the Kidderminster pastor. He wanted to know "whether there be sufficient ground in Scripture to affirme y^e ordinance of y^e Lords Supper to be y^e seale of y^e covenant of grace?" Jackson, following the Zwinglian tradition that "the only immediate end of y^e Lords Supper is to solemnize y^e memorial of his death in all ages," found difficulty in accepting it as a means of grace. Baxter, in his reply,⁴ began where Jackson left off. He owned the legitimacy of the Zurich reformer's interpretation, but he reasoned, unless one think of the sacrament as "Gods owing sign of his coven^t or Testam^t & exhibiting signe of X^t Grace," he will miss the end toward which he seems to be striving - the commemoration of Christ's death; for this commemoration cannot be kept, reminds Baxter,

1. MSS Baxter, V, 121.

2. MSS Baxter, V, 219.

3. I am unable to identify. MSS Baxter, II, 264. July 6, 1652.

4. MSS Baxter, II, 265 - August 8, 1652.

without considering "its End & Applicⁿ." Baxter's understanding of the sacrament is quite clear if we turn to his The Catechising of Families.¹ There he asks: "What is the sacrament called the Lord's Supper, or Eucharist?" His answer:

It is a sacred action in which, by bread and wine consecrated, broken, and poured out, given and taken, and eaten and drunk, the sacrifice of Christ's body and blood for our redemption is commemorated, and the covenant of Christianity mutually and solemnly renewed and sealed, in which Christ, with the benefits of his covenant, is given to the faithful, and they give up themselves to Christ, as members of his church, with which they profess communion.

John Bryan, minister of Shrewsbury,² presented a more practical matter. He actually secured a personal interview with Baxter to discuss it. The case concerned "a minister of a large parish, w^{ch} hath many Ignorant & many knowinge people [who] hath not administered y^e Lords Supper since his cominge to y^m, w^{ch} is many years, because he hath no assistinge elders." After Bryan had left Baxter's study the latter, "as soone as you were gone from me," sensing that the "minister" was really Bryan himself, sent him his "answers to y^e case expounded...wth enlargements."³ The dilemma of the minister in the case was that his own congregation had no elders and was located in a Presbyterian area. If he administered the sacrament he would offend his fellow ministers; if he did not, he was neglecting

1. Works, XIX, 274.

2. Cf. C.R. for life. John Bryan was the brother of Jervis Bryan, one of the members of the Worcester Association.

3. MSS Baxter, I, 253. November 12, 1656.

his people.

Baxter offered the following suggestions as a guide to Bryan.

- (1) "It is y^e duty of each Pastor of a p^ticular church ordinarily to administer y^e Lords Supp. to his flock." (2) "It is not ye worke of a classis or any Church governors to judge whether God should be worshipped in his ordiances or not, nor to judge whether ministers shall deliver & Ch^{es} receive y^e Lords Supper or not. But to determine of undertermined circumstances in the manner for y^e sake of order...& to see Gods owne Lawes put in operation."
- (3) He argues against the scriptural authority for lay elders, and questions their necessity for the administration of the Lord's Supper.¹ (4) Finally, he urges Bryan to call a meeting of his near ministers and seek a resolution from them. He points out that if they refuse to attend the meeting then "they must blame y^mselves...if you doe not as they expect." On the other hand, "if they satisfye you there's an end of yo^r doubts." But "if they doe not satisfye you (or will not determine it) consider seriously wth yo^rselves & with y^m, whether yo^r administering of y^e Lords wthout Elders, is like to be more injurious to y^e Church & cause of Christ (and follow the less harmful actions)."

He concludes by stressing the fact that the real problem at the Abbey Church is not whether to administer the Lord's

1. All this raises the question, is Baxter a Presbyterian? Lloyd-Thomas, in his edition of the Reliquiae, p. xix, states: "Often the chief spokesman of the Presbyterians, he was, for all that so some historians and others say, never a Presbyterian. He died as he lived, a moderate Episcopalian." Yet, his position here is in complete agreement with the true Scottish Presbyterian tradition: "The Church of Scotland has always taught that the Elder is not a minister; that he does not labour in the Word and doctrine or administer the Sacraments." Kirkpatrick and Wotherspoon, A Manual of Church Doctrine, ed. T.F. Torrance and R.S. Wright, p. 101.

Supper but rather "yo^r great busyness will be to know to whom to administer it." For his help, in this regard, he offers a word of advice: "my opinion is y^t you have no warrent as thinges now stand to take yo^r whole Parish for yo^r Ch: Though you must limit yo^r charge ordinarily to y^e bounds of y^t Parish, yet may you not take every Parishioner for a Church member." If he insists upon doing it, as he did in their conference, Baxter urges him to "exercise y^e rest of Christs Discipline & not only keepe y^e unworthy from y^e Sacrament," but also "not suffer y^m to keepe away y^mselves."

Bryan returned a note of thanks for Baxter's "grat love and kindnesse."¹ He read it "divers times over wth grat delight" and promised, almost too gleefully, "to confute more wth y^m concerning y^e Question yⁿ yet I have done, nor doubting but yo^r answer to y^e Q: will satisfy y^m."

Four young Dublin clergymen, disturbed about the administration of the sacrament in their city, directed their case to Baxter and several other leading English nonconformists.² All four had left England after the return of Charles II, and they now found that

God hath cast our lot where there are two congregations, one independent of many years standing...another

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1. MSS Baxter, I, 255. December 11, 1656.
 2. MSS Baxter, III, 76. July 8, 1667. The letter comes from Daniel Rolls, Thomas Parson, John Hooke, and Noah Bryan. Cf. C.R. and D.N.B. for an account of the lives of the latter three. The letter was sent "to Dr. Seaman, Dr. Manton, Dr. Jacomb, Dr. Bates, Mr. Baxter, Mr. Jenkyn, Mr. Poole, and Mr. Rolle."

presbyterians to which officers are chosen who undertake to assist the Minister by their advice as far as they can; but he, his officers, and people deny they are a body so constituted as is necessary for church censures. But all of them say though they have received the Lord's supper together, they are at liberty to receive with any other godly Minister when they see cause. Yet we find this liberty of theirs when made use of, hath been offensive to the Pastor of the Independent congregation.

In an obvious attempt to reconcile these two parties, they ask three specific questions:

- (1) May not a minister of the gospel administer the sacrament of the supper to a body in which...there is not the power of excommunication.
- (2) May there not be received to occasional communion such as joine ordinarily with that Presbyterian Minister.
- (3) With what authority may 4 or 5 Preaching Presbyters joining together act in and about the solemne ordinance of the Lord's Supper.

Baxter undertook to write the reply.¹ His answer is concise and lucid. He attempted to focus attention, not on the two Dublin churches, but on the whole Church: "yo^r cases I conceive are all answered by a true definition of y^e universall church & of y^e Ministerial office." His answer to their first question shows his agreement with the congregationalists on discipline: "It is a Contradiction for a minister of Christ to administer y^e Sacrament to an unorganized body y^t have not y^e power of excommunication." His answers to the other two questions demonstrates his right to the title of "meer Catholic" and his belief in the error of denominationalism. He says: (2) "You ought not to deny occasionall communion to any Christian in y^e world who by profession sheweth himself a member of y^e Universall Church;" and (3) "Every Minister of Christ is an officer related to y^e Universall Church."

1. MSS Baxter, III, 78. August 23, 1667.

At least one marriage problem was presented, although, in fact, little of what today is called "Marriage Counselling" is to be found among the yellowing leaves of Manuscript Baxter. John Berry¹ desired to know what constituted a legal marriage; was only a contract necessary,² or were solemnization and cohabitation essential?³ Baxter answered that the present "lawes & customes of the Land maketh a solemnized marriage with congress⁴ to be a certaine marriage, and a contract without solemnization or congress to be none."⁵ He pointed out that though many recognized the binding effect of a contract there was always the danger that it might only be one which, as a safe guard against later alienation of affections, is "per verba de prescientia", and therefore a false contract. Berry returned a "thankfull, humble acknowledgement for y^e last,"⁶ but was not completely convinced of the validity of Baxter's answer. He had on his side what he considered to be the weight of the law and Scriptures. He reminded his "Much Honoured" friend that the statute of Edward VI, repealing that of Henry VIII, made "a proved pre-contract to outweigh a subsequent marriage though solemnized." Not only then are "the marriages of those that were formerly promised to some other" illegal, but

1. Cf. C.R. for an account of his life.

2. Schlatter, *op. cit.*, mentions the importance of the contract theme in seventeenth century England, but discusses it in terms of divorce.

3. MSS Baxter, I, 100. November 16, 1671.

4. A New English Dictionary, Vol. II, assigns to the word "congress" in seventeenth century usage, the meaning of "sexual intercourse".

5. MSS Baxter, I, 104. November 27, 1671.

6. MSS Baxter, V, 165. January 9, 1671 (old style).

they are also "actuall sins" for "tis sure they rightly belong to those, to whom they post the first promise, & then for any other to marry them during the life of that person is to take the husband or wife of that other, w^{ch} is direct adultery as St Paul tells us Rom. 7.3."

Doctrinal Problems

Over thirty years ago, Powicke observed that ministers were the majority of Baxter's correspondents; he compiled "a list - by no means complete - of thirty obscure men, ranging from Ubley in Devonshire to Clitheroe in Lancashire who wrote to him."¹ Baxter was the pastors' pastor, the students' teacher, and the theologians' professor. In this section and the next one, we shall meet some of his clerical correspondents, both known and unknown, and their problems.

If pre-eminence is to be given to those who wrote the most often, then Abraham Pinchbecke heads the list.² In all, he addressed twelve letters to Baxter. He wrote for the first time shortly after his graduation from Cambridge while still "a stranger" to the minister at Kidderminster.³ His "present request" is "that you would send me but the heads of some argum^{ts} to prove the divinity of y^e scriptures." His justification for asking, while at the same time his apology for not knowing is: "S^r I am a young scholler or minister of y^e gospell if you will."

1. Powicke, *op. cit.*, p. 144. He never published the list.

2. Cf. C.R. for an account of his life.

3. MSS Baxter, IV, 166. June 24, 1653. At this time Pinchbecke was chaplain to the Earl of Musgrave at Krikhouse, London.

On another occasion he "came a begging" seeking resolution of two questions:¹ "(1) Whether all Moses his law & in particular the judicial be abrogated & if not tell how much & by what rule we may know;" and "(2) Whether a man having committed any sin, w^{ch} y^e scriptures [forbid] excludes a man from y^e Kingdom of heaven...supposing him to be justified before, as for example adultery or murther."

Baxter recommended that young Pinchbecke read his book on the subject.² He did and then replied, "had I then read what you had printed about y^e state of y^e justified after grosse sins I had not troubled you wth that question."³ He felt a little guilty about bothering such a busy man: "I hope S^r if I trouble you now & then wth some questions so be they be not frivolous you will not be weary of well doing;" but he never hesitated to seek resolution from him. In this same letter, he mentions "looking over" Baxter's "confession",⁴ particularly the passage dealing with the fact "that God has given over y^e power of pardoning sin into y^e hands of y^e redeemer." If this is true, and he does not doubt it, "why," he asks, "has Cht taught us to pray to y^e father for y^e pardon of sin, & why it should be y^e generall practice of Chtians to pray to Cht so much for pardon as to y^e father for Chts sake." He concludes with a warning of things to come: "I had thought to have troubled you wth some questions about Original sinne;" but he determines to ask another time.

1. MSS Baxter, IV, 49. September 28, 1658.
2. Baxter's answer is wanting and Pinchbecke only mentions the recommendation of a book, not its title. Aphorisms of Justification (1649) seems the most likely choice.
3. MSS Baxter, I, 222. December 11, 1658.
4. Richard Baxter's Confession of his Faith (1655)

Baxter's reply to Pinchbecke's last begins with a gentle rebuke: "If you hav yet some suspicion of that willingness to serve you which you are pleased to professe you believe to be in mee, mee thinkes you should not complement mee with so many apologies for your writing."¹ His answer to the question is:

I know you doubt not of that kingly power of X^t w^{ch} I assent & think you doubt not but X^t may, & must be prayed to even as the Redeemer: but yet it is most common in scriptures to find commands & examples of prayer to the Father for his sake & it must be our usuall course, for these great & evident Reasons....(1) Worship & honour is due to Christ.... (2) He that goeth to the Father must go through Christ...(3) The Father judges but through Christ, as Mediator or Administrator.

Several months later Pinchbecke, still troubled "wth some questions about originall sinne," directed yet another letter to Baxter.² But, as before, another issue was more pressing than original sin, this time he desired "solution of some difficultys about Chts incarnation." In fact, there is no record that he ever raised those troubling "questions". We temporarily take leave of the young curate of St Paul's, Covent Garden, for we shall be hearing from him again.

Joseph Milner,³ one of Powicke's "obscure men", and a stranger to Baxter, raised an exegetical problem: "Whether Rom: 7. 14 ad fin. be meant of the regenerate man or the unregenerate?"⁴ He finds that the words of Paul are an excellent excuse for "the worst of men when they commit y^e gravest sins," for they "bear up them-

1. MSS Baxter, I, 224.

2. MSS Baxter, I, 221. March 1, 1658 (old style).

3. Baxter states that he is a minister in "Middleton neer Manchester in Lancashire," but Calamy does not mention him.

4. MSS Baxter, I, 149.

selves with this that they allow not what they do, that it is not they that do it but sin in them."

Baxter returned a reply covering eight pages and containing his own translation of the entire seventh chapter of Romans;¹ but what he says here is much better said by him in his Paraphrase on the New Testament (1685). In one word, as Milner wanted it, it applies to the regenerate man; but the obvious inconsistency of his being regenerate and still sinning is explained in this fashion: "For my Nature being corrupt and my Will but imperfectly renewed, though sincere, I cannot be as good as I would be, nor do all the good which I would do, nor avoid all the evil which I would avoid, and so cannot be sinless and perfectly obedient."²

A certain Thomas Seale, remembering what he had once read "of y^t godly M^r Boulton, how divers from beyond y^e Seas had sent to him to be Resolved in divers cases of conscience,"³ directed several cases to Baxter because he was sure "y^e same Spirit w^{ch} dwelt in him dwelleth also in you."⁴ These cases arose out of a reading of Baxter's "Call to y^e Unconverted."⁵ They are:

- (1) Whether you think god hath Elected some to life and Salvation and Reprobated others to damnation.
- (2) Whether free-will be common both to y^e Elect and Reprobate or peculiar onely to y^e Elect. ffor I have Read in y^e treatise of Divine M^r Perkins treating of gods free-grace and mans free-will y^t no man own will good untill he be justified.
- (3) Whether that promise in y^e 7 of Matthews 7.8 verses to

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1. MSS Baxter, I, 151ff January 24, 1656/7.
 2. Baxter, Paraphrase, Romans 7:19.
 3. Clarke, The Marrow of Ecclesiastical History, p. 491.
 4. MSS Baxter, I, 243. March 3, 1659 (Old style).
 5. A Call to the Unconverted (1658)

be made onely to such as are in Christ, & y^t allso in y^e 3 Lamentations: 25 the Lord is good to y^m y^t wait for him etc. or whether it be made in general.

Baxter's prompt reply is badly discoloured and so difficult to read.¹ His answer to the first question is clear: "All Xians (Protestants, papists, & others) are agreed that God hath elected some to salvation & reprobated others to damnation."² His answers to the second and third questions are difficult to decipher; but he makes them plain in other contexts. In his A Saint or a Brute (1662), he declares unequivocally that man, all men, have free will.³ While in his Paraphrase he indicates that the "promise in y^e 7 of Matthews 7.8" applies only to those who "pray to God believing his power, and goodness, in the name of Christ."⁴

Many other men wrote to him on theological issues. Doolittle carried on a brief correspondence about "universal redemption".⁵ Henry Oasland⁶ asked about "original sin".⁷ So also, did Samuel Winney.⁸

Even laymen sent an occasional inquiry. John Lewis Esq. of Glaskerreg, Cardiganshire was one. His first letter was a request for some guidance on "such traditions as may be well acknowledged" in worship, i.e. "ceremonies".⁹ Baxter footnoted this letter

1. MSS Baxter, I, 245. "March 9 y^e day I received yours."
2. Martin in Puritanism And Richard Baxter, p. 136, affirms that Baxter rejected any thought of double predestination. Yet it is quite clear from his (Treatise of Conversion) Works, VII, p. 312, that he has not. What he does do, and which may have caused confusion for Martin, is to stress the Puritan idea of "calling" and not the Calvinistic theme of predestination.
3. Works, X, 88f.
4. Note to verse 8.
5. MSS Baxter, I, 121-125. March 6, 1656 (old style) - June, 1657
6. A member of Worcester Association; cf. Urwick, op. cit.
7. MSS Baxter, I, 15-20. Baxter's answer.
8. MSS Baxter, I, 14. July 18, 1674.
9. MSS Baxter, II, 128. May 25, 1656.

with the words: "This of M^r Lewis with many other motives caused me to publish my five disputations of Church Government, Liturgies & Ceremonies." During the ensuing year Lewis wrote four more letters, but Baxter, because of "necessitated haste", answered all four "briefly in this one."¹ In particular, Lewis was bothered about the keeping of Christmas. Baxter marshalls a series of valid arguments against its retention.²

(1) I remember none before Greg Nazianzene y^t write of y^e Nativity Day as kept.

(2) I remember no word in y^t tractate of Cyprian y^t speaks of y^e day as a festivall, but only of y^e nativity itselfe, w^{ch} we remember solemnly every Lords Day.

(3) There's little reason to thinke y^t tractate which mentions the keeping of a nativity day to be Cyprians or any of those 12 tractates of w^{ch} its one.

Having disposed of this matter, he concludes with what is close to his own heart - "a Colledge with Academicall Priviledges for Wales;" he asks this wealthy Welshman to contribute one thousand pounds at once, and two hundred or three hundred per annum.³

Ecclesiastical Problems

A very interesting correspondent is Edmund Elis.⁴ His first letter to Baxter, dated March 11, 1657/8, is nothing less than a gushing eulogy.⁵ His last letter, written thirty-two years later, is exceedingly critical of "some of the many errors" in Baxter's works.⁶ Between these two letters he wrote at least two more inquiring of his friends: "Whether you doe not Judge it Sinfull

1. MSS Baxter, I, 127. May 5, 1657.

2. Oscar Cullmann, Weihnachten in der Alten Kirche, uses several of these same arguments to support the validity of the celebration.

3. Education in Wales was a pet project of many of the Puritans; see, especially, the life of Thomas Gouge, Nonconformist Memorial I, 184ff.

4. Elis (Wood spells it Elys) was an Oxford graduate and a Devonshire cleric; cf. Athenae Oxoniensis. ii, 943.

5. Cf. Powicke, op. cit., p. 144.

6. Loc. cit.

to stay at home (though to read good Bookes etc.) on the Lords Day, rather than come to church, when nothing is to be heard there but the Common Prayer." Baxter's answer to the first letter, I am "more against spending the Lords Day in idleness, or in anything that is worse than the Common Prayer, than in the hearing that alone," was not very pleasing to Elis. He replied: "I thank you very heartily for y^e Letter and shall expect y^e return to this also, & then (though I should be exceeding glad to receive a Letter from you at any time) I shall not make any further request unto you. You give me not any punctual Answer to my Question."¹ The letter abounds with flowery phrases and theological jargon, but makes little sense; his only apparent reason for writing it is to challenge Baxter's meaning in the words "worse than the Common Prayer". Though he expected a "return", there is no answer on record.

Problems concerning the rights and privileges of the laity and clergy were frequently presented to Baxter. Thomas Good,² writing on behalf of several ministers, asks: "Whether lay-men may in their private meetings expound the Scripture? or to give it in the same wherein it has been delivered to me: whether it be lawful for private Christians privately meeting weekly on some working day to pray read and joyne together in y^e expounding of scriptures for y^e building up of each other in knowledge."³ Arguing from ten cogent reasons, eg. "scriptures are intelligible to private men," and

1. MSS Baxter, II, 15. August 20, 1668.

2. Good was a Shropshire Anglican who professed his liking for the Worcestershire Association although he never joined it. R.B., ii, 149.

3. MSS Baxter, II, 231. February 9, 154/5.

"Moses frequently commanded Israel to tell of God's workes to their children," Baxter¹ declares that "to meet in a house for holy exercise is not itself unlawfull & for a private man to expound Scripture & apply it, is not of its~~elf~~ unlawfull." His several works, written for the guidance of families and individuals, further testifies to his belief that laymen were to conduct public and private devotional exercises.

A Layman, J. Greenbrough, evidently a domestic servant, disturbed about the qualifications of his own pastor and therefore wondering whether he ought to attend some other church, wrote to Baxter. Baxter's resolution is:² "(1) It must be decided whether the pastor of the Ch. & parish where you live the church which he is contemplating attending be such as you may safely hold communion with. (2) Whether you know the preachers whom you now have to be unordained, or only heare so. (3) Whether they were ordained by congregational presbiters...or only by the people, or not at all." "Were I in your case" and "your Master give you liberty," he concludes, "I would joine in ordinary hearing & all communion, with the parish ch. in which I were by habitation fit."

Thomas Wadsworth³ wrote on several occasions. He sought advice "concerning the power of a single pastour."⁴ On another occasion, he sought resolution "to some cases in point of excommuni-

1. MSS Baxter, II, 232.

2. MSS Baxter, V, 100 1659.

3. See C.R. for an account of his life.

4. MSS Baxter, II, 248. Baxter's reply: MSS Baxter, II, 256.

cation."¹ A third letter expressed the fear that his assistant might not be favourably received by his people. Baxter suggested that if "he be able & prudent in a private discourse, they will sure submit to him when they have tryed his course."² For what it was worth, he related how he trained his own assistant.

The way y^t I tooke was this: for certaine weekes my assistant was allwayes present while I did my worke, & he helpd me in hearinge y^m repeat y^e words, & yⁿ sate by while I discoursed with y^m, by w^{ch} meanes he quickly perceived y^e way y^t I publickly desired one halfe y^e towne to goe to him as y^e other did to me: & at first they alighted him, till y^e reports of y^e first had much commended his way to y^e rest, & yⁿ they submitted: and y^e most bashfull had rather goe to him yⁿ me, because they are bolder with him: and yⁿ for y^e Parish, he went himselve from house to house, some times many miles in a day.

Other men had problems, too. The ministers of the Western Association in Dorset, through their secretary,³ asked for his "reasons of that assertion in y^e concord⁴ that a single Min^t has power of excommunication."⁵ Their request was ambitious: "if you would make it a body of Divinity in 9 columes & shew us each scheme, y^r reasons for the truth & against the errors, with the authors of best note each way in the Margene, I am confident it will prove of very great advantage herein."

Our friend, Abraham Pinchbecke, desired "y^e prooffe of that you have sayd in yo^r Gildas Salvianus, that a pastor may call his people to an account at any time."⁶ This request was not merely

1. MSS Baxter, II, 254f.

2. MSS Baxter, III, 188. January 17, 1656.

3. This letter is signed H. Bartlett, but is probably Robert Bartlett, cf. C.R.

4. Christian Concord: or The Agreement of the Associated Pastors and Churches of Worcestershire (1653).

5. MSS Baxter, V, 191. May 10, 1655.

6. MSS Baxter, IV, 45.

academic: "we hope or long to have a meeting wth our people & shall have need of all argum^{ts}."

Henry Newcome,¹ along with Isaac Ambrose, the best known of Lancashire nonconformists, was disturbed by his own popularity. Many had flocked to his preaching, "not so many within the compass of his own parish," but "others", he writes, "that have congregated wth us from other places, many from far, from places where the ministry either is wanting or which are not as they should be, though to some from places, where the ministers are honest."² He is troubled, because he is not sure what his duty to them should be; he feels that he "should be hindering such persons from coming from such men," and requests Baxter: "tell mee your thoughts as to that which were to be done by mee in such a case." As interesting as it might have been, Baxter's answer is lost; it is neither in Manuscript Baxter or Newcome's Autobiography, nor is the theme treated in his Reformed Pastor (1656).

It may be an anachronism to call Baxter oecumenical, but it is true none the less.³ His passion for the formation of county ministerial associations is very familiar; it is a current theme in much of his correspondence. Here is one example. Michael Edge wrote to him about the movement toward association in Staffordshire. He replied:⁴ "I am glad you are about Associatinge in yo^r

1. See C.R. and his Autobiography for an account of his life.

2. MSS Baxter, V, 65. September 27, 1656.

3. In the (Reformed Pastor), Works, XIV, 131, he lists as the thirteenth concomitant of the ministerial labour this: "We must be very studious in Union and Communion among ourselves, and of the unity and peace of the Churches that we oversee."

4. MSS Baxter, I, 249. August 24, 1658.

parts; & I should alsoe be glad if I could any way further you in it: we lose much by our distances; & our strength consisteth much in our union." He suggested the following four articles as the "generall agreem^t for communion" upon which this new association might be built.

- (1) That we will Teach all in our Parishes publicly & psonally...and that we will teach no doctrine contrary to y^e word of God.
- (2) That we will take none for adult members...but such as have psonally professed Christianity, i.e. faith & holines by a creditable profession.
- (3) That we will exercise y^e undoubted art of Discipline in our churchces.
- (4) That we will in association hold communion of Pastors & churches.

When the Presbyterians toward the end of the Commonwealth were debating the calling of a General Assembly, such as their Scottish brethren did, it was only natural that they should seek Baxter's advice. Their case was presented by the celebrated pastor of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, Thomas Manton. Baxter does not feel that he can be very helpful, indeed, he writes, "I can doe noe more but tell you of y^e contrary argum^{ts} y^t puzzel mee, & soe help to hinder rather then to resolve you." It is his candid advice that another assembly, modeled on the Westminster Assembly, will only open old wounds and become a cause for renewing old quarrels. He is only for assemblies which meet for "edification and communion" and consist of "an unanimous ministry";¹ he wants no part of a disruptive and dividing meeting.

He conducted an extensive correspondence with John Dury, another precursor of the "ecumenical movement" toward the happy goal of

1. MSS Baxter, I. 251. February 1, 1658 (old style).

forming and enlightening association, in England as well as abroad. But he would sanction no other purpose for these associations or national assemblies than that of carrying "on the Works of Unitie amongst Protestants in a gospell way."¹

Disciplinary Letters Written by Baxter

The first letter we turn up is addressed to "Simon Harrington & Wife."² There sin is "a Son who hath long bin a condemner of Gods ordinances & those y^t would have reformed him." Baxter credits himself with unusual success among the young people of Kidderminster,³ but, obviously, he was not so successful with young Harrington.

A year later Baxter addressed letters to two more disciplinary cases. The first was to the black sheep of the Doolittle family, John Doolittle.⁴ He was charged with "the odious sin of drunkenness," the town's most besetting sin.⁵ That he was the worst of the lot might be inferred from the following passage from the Reliquiae:⁶

About six or seven young men did joys with us who were afflicted to Tipling, and one of them was a weak-headed Fellow, who was a common notorious Drunkard...We told him that he was a notorious Drunkard, that we must presently admonish him, and expect his humble, penitent confession, and promise of amendment, or else we must declare him unfit for Church-Communion.

Baxter adds that several times this "Drunkard" did repent but always returned to his drinking. This letter is signed: "Subscribed in

1. MSS Baxter, I, 74. May 24, 1658.
2. MSS Baxter, IV, 133. March 26, 1656.
3. (Compassionate Counsel) Works KV, 1f.
4. Nine Doolittle's signed the second call of Baxter's, MSS Baxter, I, 213; John may well be the soldier signer of the same time.
5. R.B., I, 90f.
6. p. 91f.

the name & at the desire of the associated Ministers assembled at Kidderminster." It was, undoubtedly, a final attempt to call him to repentance. If Doolittle is the "weak-headed Fellow" mentioned above then the letter failed in its errand; for Baxter laments: "at last I declared him unfit for the Churches Communion, and required them to avoid him accordingly."¹

The second case of the year concerned John Pearsall.² He had been summoned by Baxter to appear in church to make confession of certain sins. He refused to do so and sent a letter to his cousin, Lawrence Pearsall, to this effect.³ His cousin passed the letter to Baxter who wrote an immediate reply setting out the New Testament authority for discipline, the duty of submitting to it, and lastly the character of Pearsall's offences - e.g. slander and inexcusable quarrelsomeness.⁴ The firm and yet tender quality of the letter struck a responsive cord in Pearsall's soul; he apparently made the confession required of him. But that he did not permanently amend appears from a second letter sent by Baxter.⁵ He again recounts his faults - slander, falsehood, deceptive penitence - and then says:

You are charged wth no words but w^t are accused on oath. You are required to confess with free, unconstrained penitence so much as you have confessed yourselfe to have spoken: as y^t you saw pson suspiciously together w^h your companion said he saw y^m in y^e sin: y^t you said, one was a member of y^e church, & yet after, y^t you know not whether you knew y^m: y^t by these lyes you have occasioned these mischiefs y^t have followed &

1. R.E. i, 92.

2. A young man of this name signed the second call, MSS Baxter, I, 213f.

3. MSS Baxter, IV, 138. March 19, 1656-7.

4. This letter is not in MSS Baxter, but is referred to by Powicke, op. cit., p. 110f.

5. MSS Baxter, IV, 136.

longe refuted ag^t all intreaty to open y^e truth: And worst of all y^t you subscribed a lye as your published confession.

The real purpose of the letter was to make him aware of the coming event on the morrow:

Ah John Pearsall, sin is not worthy all this friendship. It must up by the roots or you are a lost man. To conclude by Gods assistance I resolve tomorrow if you refuse a free downright Humiliation & Confession to desire y^e congregation to pray for you, and y^e next day, if you do it not, to warne them to reject and avoid you. These Phrases we use instead of y^e word (Excommunication) bec. they are the Scripture Words, & bec. y^e highest sort of Excommunicⁿ we meddle not with. The Lord give you Repentence & a new soft heart.

Along with his letter, Baxter sends Pearsall one of his books which he entreats him to "accept & read over, & if we are forced to cast you out of our communion, y^t do not in passion deny me this favour. It may be you may consider of its better in y^e reading yⁿ you did in y^e hearing."¹

One would like to imagine that the John Pearsall who added his name to the final letter from the people of Kidderminster to their "most dearly beloved" was the same John Pearsall as above.² It would mean that the church's discipline was not in vain and Baxter's urgings rewarded.

A fourth case is that of George Nichols,³ Like Doolittle, he was also guilty of drunkenness; but he was apparently more callous toward his sin and the church which attempted to reform him. He "disclaimed" his membership and Baxter disowned him: "you are no more a member of this church or of my pastoral charge...except you openly lament your sin, you shall be troubled with my admonitions no more. From this time forward I have done with you; till either

.. The book may have been The Saint's Everlasting Rest.

.. MSS Baxter, V, 142. Jan. 28, 1661-2.

.. Only two Nichols, Thomas and Milliam, appear on Baxter's second call.

God convert you, or I & my warnings & labours be brought in as a witness against you to your confusion."¹ Nichols curtly but rather innocently replied:² "Sir, Except Pearsall, y^e constable, will com to church and there acknowledge y^t he have done mee wronge in saying I was drunk when I was not, I shall not appear there. So I rest."³

Our final case is that of the Earl of Lauderdale. An extensive correspondence passed between these two during the waning days of the Commonwealth and the early ones of the Restoration.⁴ This last letter came after a breach of several years and was inspired by the depths to which this son of the Kirk had fallen. Baxter undertook, in his letter,⁵ to rebuke the Earl as one friend to another, because, as he put it, "a thousand will speake ag^t you to others, before one or two will faithfully acquaint you with it." Lauderdale's obvious sin was intemperance: "you are so shallow from all that can be called serious Religion, as that sensuality & compliance with sin is your ordinary course. In particular, that you use to take your cups unto excesse & some times unto drunkenness." There is no denying the charge either, for Baxter notes that many saw your actions "when you went with the K^{ing} to see a ship." Baxter's advice is mindful of Lauderdale's position. He doesn't advise him to leave the court, his "Mt. of Temptation,"

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1. MSS Baxter, IV, 135. This is a copy; the original of the letter has been preserved in the Archives of the Kidderminster Town Hall.
 2. MSS Baxter, IV, 137.
 3. Baxter's practice of ecclesiastical discipline will be mentioned in the next chapter.
 4. See Powicke, "Correspondence between the Rev. Richard Baxter and the Earl of Lauderdale," Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, Vol. 10.
 5. Additional Manuscript 32,094, British Museum.

though he thinks it the more advisable course of action, but instead he beseechs him: "Watch, & Walke with God! Lose not your hatred of sin, your zeale for God, & tendering of his honour. Never do that which intimateth your approbation of knowne sin; or tendeth to incourage any in it." To insure that the Earl did not miss interpret his intention in writing, Baxter says: "My chiefe end is for God's honour & your everlasting peace...My next end is, that I may receive such full information & direction from you, by which I may be enabled most successfully to use my small ability & interest for the just vindication of your honour, when backbiters & slanderers make it necessary." He concludes in a way calculated to convince the Earl of his genuine interest and continued friendship: "I have not let any living soule be acquainted with this advice to you."

One cannot help but wonder, along with F.J. Powicke, why a man like Baxter ever admitted friendship with such a man as Lauderdale. One is tempted to ask: was Baxter mistaken about his man? His duplicities before 1651 and his swift degeneration after 1660 marks him as a man of continued and habitual vice. Perhaps the eye of the pastor's heart saw what the vision of history misses - that even until the very end there was some good in the Earl, a good which Baxter was ever trying to draw out; if he failed, it was not for want of effort.

Summary

Orme's¹ reference to Baxter's correspondence is an excellent summary of this chapter:

¹ Works, I, 169.

Baxter was consulted by great numbers of his brethren in the ministry in various parts of the country, respecting matters in which they were concerned; and by a multitude of private individuals, on cases of conscience, which he was requested to solve. To all these he returned, often, long and minute letters, the manual labour of which must have been very considerable, especially as he kept copies of many of them.

As a pastoral correspondent, Baxter was seldom theoretical but always practical. He never offered advice where there were others more able to do so. He sought always to magnify the grand truths, scriptural and otherwise, and ^{he} generally minimized the particular problems and disturbances that called them forth. Finally, his answers were more often positive than negative, even when given in a critical tone.

CHAPTER VIII

ECCLESIASTICAL DISCIPLINE

Introduction

The treatment of Baxter's disciplinary letters concluding the last chapter brings us conveniently to the Puritan exercise of ecclesiastical discipline. Discipline in Puritanism, as well as in Scottish Presbyterianism¹ and sixteenth century Calvinism,² was linked with the cure of souls. The practice of discipline - "the due exercise of that authority and power which the Lord Christ, in and by his word, hath granted unto the church, for its continuance, increase, and preservation in purity, order, and holiness, according to his appointment"³ - was the pastor's final recourse in the practice of the cure of souls. Although it was designed to preserve the purity of the church, it also provided opportunity to reclaim those whose actions revealed that their consciences had passed from a disturbed and troubled state to an evil one. The purpose of this brief concluding chapter is not to show the place and development of that practice within all branches of Puritanism,⁴ but only to demonstrate the juridical and spiritual aspects of its use by some of the Presbyterian and Congregational physicians of the soul. Such items as the Erastian controversy, which disturbed the Westminster Assembly,⁵ and the issue arising out of the question

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1. Cf. John T. McNeill, A History of the Cure of Souls, pp.247-260
 2. Cf. John T. McNeill, "Personal Counselling in Early Protestantism," Christendom, Vol. VI, pp.368-371.
 3. John Owen, (A Brief Instruction in the Word of God), Works, XV, 512
 4. Cf. Horton Davies, The Worship of the English Puritans, pp.232-242
 5. Cf. W.M. Hetherington, The History of the Westminster Assembly, Chaps. VI, VII, and William M. Campbell, The Triumph of Presbyterianism, pp.62-65, 106-109, for a discussion of this subject.

of whether or not the English civil power should retain exclusive control over excommunication are not discussed.

The Juridical Aspects of Puritan Ecclesiastical Discipline

Both the Presbyterians and Congregationalists exercised discipline. Their practice, at times, shows marked agreement, while at other times, they are in decided disagreement. The reason for the similarities and differences in their practice is due to the fact that both traditions are indebted to William Ames.¹

Ames's position is set forth in the chapter on "Christ's Ordinance of Discipline", in his Conscience, with the Power and Cases thereof.² He divides his treatment into four sections. In the first, he enumerates the sins warranting discipline. They are "Hainous offences" and "personall injuries". He excludes, as undeserving of censure, "those infirmities which are common, almost to all Beleevers." The second section deals with "the ends of Discipline," which is "the correction of the Sinner to take away scandals, that Beleevers may goe on, without offence, in a course of holinesse." He treats next of the five Biblical steps in administering discipline; admonition in private; admonition in the presence of witnesses; the offender's sin told to the church; suspension, "the lesser Excommunication", from the privileges of the church; and excommunication. In his exposition of this last step,

1. Perry Miller, Orthodoxy in Massachusetts, 1630-50, p.81, denominates him a non-separating Congregationalist.

2. Bk. 4, 85-90. This position is very similar to Calvin's as set forth in his short Instruction in Faith.

he demonstrates that he is neither a true Congregationalist nor Presbyterian, and that both may legitimately borrow from him. On the one hand, he holds that members of one church cannot be excommunicated by another, nor whole churches by higher judicatories. Yet, on the other hand, he allows that "Assemblies and Synods, when any difficultie doth arise, by common consent to declare and discerns who are to be excommunicated." Finally, he asserts that the true and desired effect of excommunication is to "purge out the leaven" and so "keepe the lumpe pure."

The best exposition of the Presbyterian position is to be found in the Westminster Standards and in the writings of Richard Baxter. The fullest account of the subject is that given by the Congregationalist, Thomas Goodwin, in his book, On, the Constitution, Right, Order, and Government of the Churches of Christ. The most charitable treatment is by the other twin giant of Independency, John Owen. All show a distinct indebtedness to Ames.

Both Presbyterians and Congregationalists commence their arguments by asserting their belief in the importance and necessity of ecclesiastical discipline for the preservation of the fellowship incorruptible, but they agree with Ames that such a serious course of action ought not to be followed except in the case of a grave offence. Goodwin¹ writes: "It is scandalous sin that is the matter of censure, sin judged so by common light and received principles; sin that goes afore to judgment, that you may read afar off; I Tim. v. 24. Doubtful disputations and sins contro-

1. WORKS, XI, Bk. I, 48.

verted are not to be made the subject of church censures; for if the weak are not to be received to such, then neither are they to be cast out for such." Baxter¹ writes that excommunication should be exercised only when these two conditions prevail: "1. A heinousness in the sin. 2. Impenitence after due admonition and patience." Owen² enumerates five sins deserving of censure: moral evils, offences against mutual love, heresy, blasphemy, and dissension of the church. A much more comprehensive list is provided by the Congregationalist, Stephen Ford, in his A Gospel-Church: or, God's Holy Temple opened:³

1. Strong and violent passions. 2. Apparent Wrath, Envy, Bitterness and Anger shewed, without great provocation.
3. Apparent Frowardness, Peevishness, Clamour and Strife.
4. Jangling, Disputing and Peace breakings, and all things that directly hinder the Edification and Peace of the Church.
5. Backbitings, and speaking evil against, or of one another.
6. Constant or frequent neglects of Family and Church-duties, and the Ordinances of God in them. 7. Needless Associating and holding Communion with profane and scandalous persons.
8. Defrauding any persons of their first dues any way, on any account whatsoever, when it might have been prevented.
9. Disobedience to the Lawful Commands and Rules of Parents, Masters, Magistrates, Elders, or any other that have Authority over them. 10. Publishing false Doctrines against the Fundamentals of the Gospel, Faith, and Worship. 11. False accusing any Persons, especially any of the Church. 12. Railing at, or reviling others to their face, or behind their backs. 13. Idleness, Tatling, and Busie-bodies in other mens matters that concern them not.

This list is little different from that account of the disciplined cases of the Independent Church of Rothwell given in another chapter, or from those of any other seventeenth century church book.⁴

1. (A Christian Directory), Works, V, 445.
2. Works, XV, 522f.
3. p. 343f.
4. Cf. The Church Book of Bunyan Meeting, 1650-1821, ed. G.B. Harrison, and Records of the Churches of Christ Gathered at Fenstanton, Warboys, and Hexham, 1644-1720, ed. Edward B. Underhill.

Cragg¹, having examined many of these books, writes: "Lapses of two types made a member subject to the discipline of the congregation: he might have been remiss in the performance of his church duties, or he might have broken the moral standards which the Puritans accepted." All this suggests that there was a high standard of conduct expected of the individual, and a not inconsiderable amount of scrupulosity practised by congregations.

It was just because of this fact, the almost impossible task of conforming to the desired pattern, that the ordinance of discipline was regularly practised. For as the Westminster Confession of Faith puts it:² "Church Censures are necessary for the reclaiming and gaining of Offending Brethren, for deterring of others from the like Offences, for purging out of that Leaven which might infect the whole Lump, for vindicating the Honour of Christ, and the holy Profession of the Gospel, and for preventing the Wrath of God, which might justly fall upon the Church, if they should suffer his Covenant and Seals thereof to be profaned, by notorious and obstinate Offenders."

The disciplinary steps followed by both Presbyterians and Congregationalists agree in method as well as purpose and meaning. Baxter's method is set forth in the Reliquiae and the Reformed Pastor. "Every first Wednesday of the Month" was devoted to Parish discipline, and "every first Thursday of the Month was the Ministers meeting for Discipline and Disputation."³ He briefly

1. Gerald R. Cragg, Puritanism in the Period of the Great Persecution, 1660-1688, p. 171.
2. The Confession of Faith, etc., Chap. XXX, Sect. III, p. 155.
3. R.B. 1, 84.

outlines his procedure in this way: "private reproofs - In more public reproof. - Persuading the person to meet expressions of repentance. - Praying for them. - Restoring the penitent. - Excluding and avoiding the impenitent." Baxter's method agrees with the Reformed tradition and the Westminster Directory.

Owen¹ exercised discipline in four steps:

In personal private admonition of any member or members of the church, in case of sin, error, or any miscarriage known unto themselves;² in public admonition in case of offences persisted in, and brought orderly to the knowledge and consideration of the church;³ in the ejection of obstinate offenders from the society and communion of the church;⁴ in exhorting, comforting, and restoring to the enjoyment and exercise of church-privileges such as are recovered from the error of their ways.⁵

Goodwin⁶ informs us that ecclesiastical discipline goes through three stages. First, the sinner is admonished, then excommunicated, and finally rejected. He details each stage so that no one will mistake his meaning:

If the sin be private, so as thou alone knowest it, "That thy brother sin against thee," Mat. xvi, 11, 15, "Go and tell him his fault, between him and thee alone, if he hear and repent (as it is Luke xvii. 3), thou shalt forgive him," and it shall go no further. This provision hath Christ took to preserve the reputation of persons, so to mend them as not to blaze their faults; and this not for one so sinning, but if seven times, that is, never so oft, Luke xvii, 4.

The second stage ensues only when the sinner is unrepentant:⁷

If he neglect to hear thee, that is, repents not, then take two or three and tell him of it afore them, and if he denies not the fact, and yet repents not, then thou hast two

1. Works, XV, 516

2. Matt. 18:15; I Thess. 5:14; I Cor. 4:14; Titus 1:13, 2:15; II Tim. 4:2

3. I Tim. 5:19f; Matt. 18:16f;

4. Titus 3:10; I Tim. 1:20; Matt. 18:17; I Cor. 5:5; Gal. 5:12.

5. II Cor. 2:7f; Gal. 6:1; II Thess. 3:15.

6. Works, XI, 48.

7. Works, XI, 48f.

or three witnesses of his not denying the fact, and yet of his obstinacy and hardness in not relenting, and of his impenitency; so it follows, "That is the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established," that is, brought into public.

Finally, the matter is brought to the notice of the church upon the authority of the command of Christ; "If he neglect to hear them, tell it to the church." "If it were a sin that is public, that is, though privately committed, yet made known, commonly re-proved, and so commonly known, as it is I Cor. v. 1, then the church is to take immediate notice of it publicly, without telling it in private; and those that can accuse, should impeach, as I Cor, v. 13 shews, and also I Tim. v. 20."¹ If, on the other hand,²

it be a sin that is suspected, and cannot be proved (whether commonly reported or private), and that by two or three witnesses, the officers are to cast it out of the church proceeding, and not to receive it: "Receive not an accusation," so as to proceed in it, unless it appears evident by two or three witnesses. This rule is given about admonishing officers, 2 Tim. v. 19; but it regards also every man else, Mat. xviii, 16. Then, when any sin is thus made of public cognisance, 1, they are to admonish; 2, to excommunicate in case of obstinacy and impenitence.

Philip Henry's procedure, as described by his son, was simple and direct:³

The Discipline he observed in his Congregation, was, not such as he could have wished for, but the best he could get ... If he heard of any that walked disorderly, he sent for them, and reprov'd them, gently or sharply, as he saw the case required. If the Sin was publick and gross, he suspended them from the Ordinance of the Lord's Supper, till they gave some Token of their Repentance and Reformation. And his Judgement was, that some publick Satisfaction should be made to the Congregation, before Re-admission. But whatever Offence or Breache of Christian Peace happened, Mr Henry's

1. Ibid. XI, 49.

2. Loc. cit.

3. Matthew Henry, An Account of the Life and Death of Mr Philip Henry, p. 206. Philip Henry was a Presbyterian.

peculiar Excellency lay in restoring with the Spirit of meekness, which so much commended the Respects of his People.

It is important for our study that we pause here a moment and note the one significant difference in the practice of these four men. Baxter and Goodwin record, as the final step in discipline, the rejection of the impenitent. Owen and Henry, on the other hand, prefer to follow this step by another, the restoration of the penitent. It would appear from this that certain Puritan physicians of the soul were more charitable than others. That this was not confined to one tradition or the other, but transcended denominational lines, is self evident. We shall say more about this in the next section.

The only place at which Presbyterians and Congregationalists disagree in the exercise of discipline is over the authority of higher judicatories. The Westminster Directory states: "It is Lawful and agreeable to the Word of God, that the Church be governed by several sorts of Assemblies, which are Congregational, Classical, and Synodical..... It is Lawful and agreeable to the Word of God, that all the said Assemblies have some Power to dispense Church-censures."¹ Goodwin denies the validity of the Presbyterian system, and so denies, too, this rubric from the Directory.

The success enjoyed from this practice by Baxter was envied by pastors of both denominations. He records:² (1) "We kept the Church from irregular Separations;" (2) "We helpt to Cure

1. (Directory concerning Church-Government), Confession of Faith, etc., p. 420.

2. R.B., i, 92.

that dangerous Disease among the People, of imagining that Christianity is but a matter of Opinion and dead Belief and to convince them how much of it consisteth in Holiness, and how far it is inconsistent with reigning Sin;" and (3) "We greatly suppressed the practice of Sin, and caused People to walk more watchfully than else they would have done."

The above discussion warrants three conclusions. First, the Puritans considered ecclesiastical discipline to be a divine ordinance justified by the New Testament, intended to preserve the purity and unity of the fellowship, and calculated to bring the sinner to his knees. Secondly, the Presbyterians and Congregationalists were in general agreement as to the purpose and exercise of this ordinance, but disagreed as to the right of higher judicatories to exercise discipline over lower ones and their members. Finally, it is also clear from the above, as well as from Chapter IV, that an extremely high standard of conduct was expected of church members, and any infringement of the moral code was treated with grave concern, which usually resulted in admonition and even excommunication. In the light of these conclusions, it is easy to see that the spiritual physician, intent upon preserving the purity of the church, was constantly in danger of looking with indifference and even callousness upon the sinner and his feelings. To what degree this actually happened, remains now to be seen.

The Spiritual Aspects of Puritan Ecclesiastical Discipline

Pastors had to practice their cure of souls within this juridical framework of ecclesiastical discipline. They well knew that the supervision of the lives of others was a prerogative easy to

claim but hard to exercise. They were aware that it was perilously easy for the result to be negative and the prevailing attitude censorious.¹ Therefore, they were constantly on guard against this temptation, and in most cases successfully avoided it. Davies² draws this conclusion from his study of Puritan discipline: "The end of Excommunication was not simple to lop off dead wood or poisonous fungus from the tree of the Church; its purpose was corrective, not vindictive." Cragg's³ evaluation is very similar: "In most of the records of groups which seriously exercised discipline the desire to reclaim is more apparent than the impulse to condemn." We turn our attention now to the spiritual aspects of the disciplinary practices of several physicians of the soul to determine for ourselves whether or not, as Cragg⁴ concludes; "In the seventeenth century the oversight of other people's lives was often exercised with both wisdom and forbearance." The three stages of admonition, excommunication, and restoration, will be examined.

As we saw in the previous section, private admonition was the first step in the exercise of censure; it was hoped that it would also be the only one. As a way of insuring this, Owen charged both "private members" and "elders", that they are to "be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, Rom. xii. 9, 10," which "is to exert and put forth itself in tender care and watch-

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1. Owen, (True Nature of a Gospel Church), Works, XVI, 183, goes so far as to state: "all excommunication is evangelically null where there is wanting an evangelical frame of spirit in those by whom it is administered...."
 2. Davies, op. cit. p. 238. The last phrase is borrowed from Owen, Works, XVI, 171. John Ball, A Short Catechism, 164, speaks in similar language: "The censures of the church are medicines to cure, not poisons to destroy...."
 3. Cragg, op. cit. p. 170.
 4. Ibid., p. 169.

fulness for the good of each other."¹ They are further directed to admonish in such a way that "the person offending may be convinced that it is done out of love to him and affectionate, conscientious care over him, that he may take no occasion thereby for the exasperation of his own spirit."² Finally, they are reminded of the two-fold purpose of admonition:³

1. To keep up love without dissimulation among all the members of the church; for if offences should abide unremoved, love, which is the bond of perfection, would not long continue in sincerity, which tends to the dissolution of the whole society.
2. To gain the offender, by delivering him from the guilt of sin, that he may not lie under it, and procure the wrath of God against himself, Lev. xix. 17.
3. To preserve his person from dishonour and disreputation, and thereby to keep up his usefulness in the church. To this end hath our Lord appointed the discharge of this duty in private, that the failings of men may not be unnecessarily divulged, and themselves thereby exposed unto temptation.
4. To preserve the church from that scandal that might befall it by the hasty opening of all the real or supposed failings of its members. And, -
5. To prevent its trouble in the public hearing of things that may be otherwise healed and removed.

When the necessity for public admonition was indicated, our pastors urged the church to two considerations. First, prove the accusation. Baxter⁴ writes:

It is better to let many vicious persons go unpunished, or uncensured, when we want sufficient evidence, than to censure one unjustly; which we may easily do, if we will go upon too bold presumptions; and then it will bring upon the pastors the scandal of impartiality, and unrighteous and injurious dealing, and make all their reproofs and censures contemptible.

Secondly, reprove the sinner with charity and objectivity. Owen charges the elders:⁵ "consider the nature of the offence, with the

1. Works, XV, 517
2. Ibid., XV, 518
3. Ibid., XV, 519
4. Works, XIV, 105 8; also Owen, Works, XV, 223.
5. Works, XV, 521.

condition and temptation of the offender, with such a spirit of meekness as our Lord Jesus Christ, in his own person, set them an example of in his dealing with sinners, and which is required in them as his disciples, Gal. vi. 1,2; 2 Cor. ii. 8." William Bradshaw,¹ writing somewhat earlier, decried the practice of Ecclesiastical Courts, "that when he that hath committed a scandalous crime cometh before them and is convinced of the same," they "scorne, deride, taunt and revile him." He recommends instead, that the church "use him brotherly, not giving the least personal reproaches, but laying open unto him the nature of his sinne by the light of Gods word," being willing to "heare what every offender can possibly say for himselfe, either for qualification, defense, apopolgy, or justification of any supposed crime or errour whatsoever," and not proceeding "to censure the grossest offence that is, untill the offender have said as much for himself in his defense as he possibly is able."

When impenitency persisted in the face of both private and public admonishing, the pastor had no other choice but to excommunicate the sinner. There were two means, however, by which he might mitigate the severity of this drastic sentence. First, the excommunicated was not denied the chief means of his repentance. William Perkins, an otherwise strict disciplinarian, writes:² the sinner is to be "admitted to the hearing of the Word, because that is a meanes to humble for his sinne, and to bring him to repentance, which is the end of Ecclesiastical censures." The Confession of Faith³ distinguishes between "Suspension from the Sacrament of the

1. English Puritanism, p. 23.

2. Works, II, 212.

3. Confession of Faith, etc., Chap. XXX, Sect. IV, p. 155f.

Lord's Supper for a Season" and "Excommunication from the Church." The former is preferred before the latter. Excommunication is exercised only when suspension fails to produce contrition. Secondly, as Ames and Owen declare,¹ the saints were to keep the impenitent at arm's length, but the sinner's family and civic relations were not suspended.

Even when no alternative to excommunication presented itself, and the impenitent was put out of sight; he was not put out of mind. He was remembered in prayer,² sometimes further admonished,³ and "the duties of love and care" often performed toward him.⁴ Not all pastors, as we saw in the previous section, showed the same degree of forbearance and long-suffering, however. Owen, on the one hand, did. He writes:⁵ "The person offending thus cut off, or cast out from the present actual communion of the church, is still to be looked on and accounted as a brother, because of the nature of the ordinance which is intended for his amendment and recovery, - 2 Thess. iii. 15, 'Count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.' " Baxter and Goodwin, on the other hand, are far less charitable. Baxter seems to suggest that there is a limit to pastoral forbearance. His words to George Nichols are a ringing reminder of this attitude: "you are no more a member of this church or my pastoral charge...except you openly lament your sin, you shall be troubled with my admonitions no more. From this time forward I have done with you till either God convert you,

1. Cf. Ames, op. cit., Bk. IV, 89f; Owen, Works, XVI, 180.
 2. Baxter, Works, XIV, 114; Owen, Works, XV, 523.
 3. Owen, Works, XV, 523.
 4. Loc. cit.
 5. Loc. cit.

or I & my warning & labours be brought in as a witness against you to your confusion."¹ That Baxter, throughout his ministry, was concerned "for the sake of the rest more than for them" (the few impenitent of Kidderminster) is obvious, and in the light of the times and the magnitude of his ministry, perhaps even excusable. Yet, one cannot help but wonder how this "dying man" ever willingly cut himself completely off from one of the "dying men". Goodwin's² descriptive phrase for excommunication, "delivering unto Satan," leaves little doubt as to the degree of his pastoral responsibility. If there is a doubt as to his position, it is clarified by these words:

Excommunication imports a positive punishment, for it is a spiritual revenge. The negative throwing out of the church is but that which is common to all societies; 'But the weapons of our warfare' (says the apostle) 'are mighty through God, having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience,' 2 Cor. x. 4-6, as will be evident if we do but lay all these following things together. 1. That Satan is ready to punish the man in his spirit by terrors, and to set on his sins with horrors if he have leave from Christ. 2. This man is by the power of Christ given up, and not left only to him. 3. He is given up to Satan to punish and correct him: I Tim. i. 20, 'Whom I have delivered to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme,' that is, that they may learn how horrid a sin it is to blaspheme by what Satan inflicts.

But even Goodwin, despite the fact that he concludes his list of steps to be followed in ecclesiastical discipline with excommunication, recognizes that the church should yearn for the sinner's repentance and comfort him when he does.³

Restoration was the desired end of excommunication for most of the spiritual physicians. John Ball⁴ catechetically summarised

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1. Supra, Chap. VII
 2. Works, XI, 45.
 3. Cf. Works, XI, 46.
 4. A Short Catechism, p. 163.

the ends of discipline in this fashion: "The unruly should be admonished, the obstinate excommunicated and the penitent after their fall restored and comforted." The Confession of Faith obliged all elders to consider that to them, "the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven are committed; by virtue whereof they have Power respectively to Retain, and Remit Sins; to shut that Kingdom against the Impenitent, both by the Word, and Censures; and to open it unto Penitent Sinners by the Ministry of the Gospel, and by Absolution from Censures, as Occasion shall require."¹ It was Baxter's revised judgement that "if God shall give them repentance they are gladly to be received into the communion of the church again."² Finally, Owen³ set it down as an integral part of the spiritual use of discipline, that "in case the Lord Jesus be pleased to give a blessed effect unto this ordinance, in the repentance of the person cut off and cast out of the church," these three measures were to be taken toward him, he is:

(1) To be forgiven both by those who in as especial manner were offended at him and by him, and by the whole church, Matt. xviii. 18; 2 Cor. ii. 7.

(2) To be comforted under his sorrow, 2 Cor. ii. 7, and that by, - [1] The application of the promises of the gospel unto his conscience; [2] A declaration of the readiness of the church to receive him again into their love and communion.

(3) Restored, - [1] By a confirmation or testification of the love of the church unto him, 2 Cor. ii. 8; [2] A re-admission unto the exercise and enjoyment of his former privileges in the fellowship of the Church; all with a spirit of meekness, Gal. vi. 1.

Summary

The Puritans were convinced that Christ had given them "the

• Confession of Faith, etc., Chap. XXX, Sect. II, p. 154.

• Works, XIV, 114.

• Cf. Works, XV, 524, and XVI, 181.

keys of the kingdom" to preserve the purity of the fellowship and to humble the sinner. They exercised their discipline in accordance with New Testament teaching, and with love and charity for the offender as well as justice for the offended. The spiritual aspects of their practice reveal a tenderness in excess of any normally credited to them, and suggest that for them, at least, the use of this ordinance played a meaningful role in their cure of souls.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

The Puritan pastors in this study have ably demonstrated their practice of the cure of souls, and very little more remains to be said. It was a ubiquitous practice and one infinite in variety. Yet, despite this fact, several general conclusions concerning the Puritan cure of souls can now be drawn. In the first instance, as the title of this thesis implies, their cure of souls was practical. Pastors might, and often did, differ as to the best procedure and methods to follow, but they were all agreed that instruction and counsel should be practically applied. They rejected that part of their medieval heritage which made casuistry a theoretical science, and ethics an impractical discipline. Each element in their cure of souls was practically administered. Their catechizing was conducted by way of question and answer, rather than by the earlier lecture method. Their manuals on cases of conscience treated of every conceivable problem or case likely to face the saints as they made their pilgrimage through life, and were made available to everyman, that each might have his own practical guide. Their counsel, offered either in conferences or through the post, though usually Scriptural in language, was always practical in character.

In the second instance, the content of their cure of souls was Biblical. The Bible was the supreme authority in their

casuistry, the text book for their Christian instruction, and the source of all their counsel. In so far as Biblical truth remained the norm and content of their ministry they were true to their Reformation heritage. But when, as in catechizing, they over emphasized the Ten Commandments and other passages of the moral law, they were guilty of lapsing into a kind of Medieval Pharisaism, and of imposing burdens too grievous to be borne. Yet, the systematic attempt, through catechizing, to impress upon young minds and consciences the main requirements of the accepted moral code, is to be commended. It is this which labels their care of conscience, a real cure of souls. We can only wish that they had stressed more of the great moments of the Heilsgeschichte in their instruction and counsel, for then their practice would never have been liable to the charge of legalism.

A third conclusion to be drawn from this practice is that the Puritan cure of souls aimed at the individual conscience. They rightly recognized that the conscience was the implanted witness of God, the meeting point between God and man, theology and ethics. Their reliance upon Aquinas and some of the other Medieval scholastics was good to the degree that they saw the function of conscience as a practical judgement based upon an accumulated knowledge. They inherited more than they should have, however, and their application of Aristotelian logic and categories to the study of conscience tended to disassociate their discussion from the New Testament teaching. Despite this

lapse they realized that the individual conscience needed to be both educated and counselled, by the application of Scriptural truth.

In both their instructing and counselling, the Puritans were more apt to recognize what they often denied in their exercise of discipline, that each individual was different and his needs different. The various practices in their cure of souls, even when conducted within the family or group, were aimed at the individual. This method had the advantage of ministering to both the individual and the fellowship. Occasionally, in their counselling, however, the pastor's assumption of the prophetic role tended to minimize, if not neglect, the role of the other.

In the fourth instance, the Puritans saw the practice of their cure of souls as a long, drawn out, and continuous practice, beginning at birth and continuing until death. The main elements of this continuous practice have been singled out in this thesis, but it is not so much the individual practices as the corporate ministry which indelibly underscores their cure of souls. Indeed, it is the continuous character of their soul care that sets apart the individual practices as being somewhat superior and exceptional. Neither their catechizing nor casuistry can measure up to Reformation standards, but when considered as a part of their prolonged ministry to souls, they both take on richer value. Their use of both conferences and pastoral letters to apply advice and counsel

over an extended period, even in an age devoid of rapid communication, suggests that perhaps they had a keener interest in the maturation of souls than is now evinced by those who find their practice suspect. Even their use of discipline, a questioned part of any cure of souls, indicates that the more evangelically minded continued to minister even to those who cut themselves off from the purity of the fellowship.

The final conclusion to be drawn from this study is, that the Puritan practice has a significance and relevance for the Church's present ministry. This significance, in terms of the historical, theological and practical, deserves comment. Historically, Puritanism provides a sure foundation upon which the Church of today can ground its cure of souls. The Puritan practice is both a Biblical and Reformation practice. Even more importantly, its interest in the conscience is not dissimilar from the present day interest of psychiatry, which is so radically affecting much of Protestantism's cure of souls.

The Puritan practice provides a theological basis for present day soul care as well. First, it encourages us to re-think our own moral theology as they were compelled to re-think theirs. The Puritans were quite willing to accept the Medieval teaching on conscience, but they refused to accept their ethics or their discussion on moral theology. They re-examined medieval casuistry in the light of the Scriptures and made some radical changes in it. Such an examination on our part, in the

light of our more advanced Biblical scholarship, seems in order. Secondly, the Puritan practice suggests to those of us who stand in the Calvinist tradition, that if we ignore the weaknesses inherent in their Federal Theology, we can find in their Calvinism a theology of God, Christ and man sufficient for our cure of souls. Thirdly, the Puritans demonstrate that the language and terminology of the Scriptures and theology is sufficient for this great work. It is not necessary for us to borrow the jargon of psychology to effectively minister to souls.

The Puritans make several practical suggestions to the present Church, as well. The Church would do well to examine and take notice of the way in which Puritan pastors effectively used catechizing and confession. It may seriously be asked, whether the modern Sunday School movement is an adequate substitute for catechizing. Catechizing successfully taught morals and doctrine in a way that the Sunday School has not. The place of confession in the life of the Church also needs to be examined. The Puritans demonstrate that it is possible to retain confession without keeping the confessional. They made it a valuable part of their cure of souls and yet avoided its abuses. The counselling ministry is well advised to reconsider its prophetic role. The Puritan pastors show that the counsel of God can be applied with telling effect, and with greater authority than any human wisdom. The Puritans further show,

that pastoral letter writing, often neglected or ignored today, can be a ready ally to the physician of the soul. The Puritans demonstrate, too, that the fostering of individual and family piety is a great asset to the cure of souls. Finally, the pastor of today, seeking for a model of the Reformed Pastor, can look with assurance to the Puritans, who were devoted to their Lord, faithful to their flock, and true to themselves.

There are several suggestions for further study. First, an investigation of the cure of souls in left-wing Puritanism needs to be made; not only its practice, but its origins, theology and development are worth examination. A true evaluation of Puritan instruction cannot be made until a comprehensive study of its catechizing is made. In particular, a study of the Larger Catechism, its origin, development and effect, is long overdue. Finally, a more comprehensive study of Puritan pastoral letter writing, involving the untreated correspondence of John Owen, and the mass of Quaker letters, along with Fox's letters and many others, seems in order.

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APPENDIX A
A PARTIAL LIST OF PURITAN
PHYSICIANS OF THE SOUL AND CATECHISTS

The difficulty of defining what is actually meant by a Puritan is very considerable. The aim here has been to make this list as inclusive as possible. It contains a brief summary of each man's ministry, the dates and places, notice of university training, along with his contemporaries' evaluation of his pastoral and catechetical work, when such an appraisal is available. This list also serves as a cross reference to Appendix B, where the titles of most Puritan catechetical writings are listed by date and author. Although this is primarily a list of English Puritans, the names of several New England ministers appear because they first exercised a ministry in England.

At the end of each entry reference is made to the printed sources used. The abbreviated titles for these references are:

A.C.	<u>Alumni Cantabrigienses</u> , ed. John and J.A. Venn.
A.O.	<u>Alumni Oxonienses</u> , ed. Joseph Foster.
B.	Benjamin Brook, <u>The Lives of the Puritans</u> .
Clarke, <u>Lives</u>	Samuel Clarke, <u>A General Martyrologie</u> .
C.R.	<u>Calamy Revised</u> , ed. A.G. Matthews.
D.N.B.	<u>Dictionary of National Biography</u> , ed. Stephen and Lee.
Marchant	Donald Marchant, <u>The Puritans and the Church Courts</u> .
P.	Samuel Palmer, <u>Nonconformist Memorial</u> .
Wood.	Anthony Wood, <u>Athenae Oxoniensis</u> .

Other abbreviations used:

+	indicates the minister was ejected.
*	indicates the minister was a member of the Westminster Assembly.
#	indicates the number of a catechism in Appendix B.
C	Curate
P	Pastor
R	Rector
M	Minister
L	Lecturer
p	Preacher
V	Vicar
T	Teacher

Abbot, Robert (1588?-1662?)

Camb.; C Wool, Dorset; V Cranbrook, Kent, 1615-43; V Southwick, Hants.; p St. Augustine's, Watling Street, London, c. 1645-53. - A.C., B.

99

+Adams, Thomas (1633?-1670)

Oxf.; lecturer-dean Brasenose College, Oxf., 1655-62; chaplain to the Countess of Clare: "His labours in that honourable family, by his catechizing and weekly preaching, were very acceptable." - P,I,214; A.O., C.R., D.N.B.

155

+Alleine, Joseph (1633-1668) - Presbyterian

Oxf.; A St. Mary Magdalene, Taunton, Som., 1655-62. - A.O., C.R.

"He did use to spend five afternoons every week" in catechizing, and was the author of the agreement for catechizing drawn up for the ministers of Somersetshire. - P,III,210.

Cf. Chapter III for a description of his method.

131

Alleine, Richard

Oxf.; R Dicheat, Som., there 1606. - Wood.

66

Ames, William (1576-1633) - Congregationalist

Camb.; chaplain to Sir Horace Vere; Calvinist observer at Synod of Dort; professor of theology at Franeker, Holland, afterwards R, 1622-33. - A.C., D.N.B.

Cf. Chapter I for an account of his place in the development of the Puritan cure of souls.

20

Angier, John (1605-1677) - Moderate Presbyterian

Camb.; P Ringley, 1630; C Denton. Manchester, Lancs., 1632-1677. - A.C., C.R., D.N.B.

He was "an excellent casuist." - P,II,360.

+Angier, Samuel (1639-1713) - Congregationalist

Oxf.; A Denton, Manchester, there 1667; formed a Congregational church at Dukinfield, Ches., 1681-1713. - C.R.

176

+Annesley, Samuel (1619-1696) - Presbyterian

Oxf.; p Cliffe, Kent, St. John the Evangelist, Friday Street, London, and St. Paul's, London; P St. Giles, Cripplegate, 1658-62. - C.R., D.N.B.

"Whatever he was for a civilian, his works will witness for him that he was a good divine, and a considerable casuist." - P,I,124.

William Attersall or Attersoll (d. 1640)

Camb.; R Isfield, Sussex, 1600-40. - D.N.B.

51

+Austin, Samuel (1606-1670)

Oxf.; V Luton, Beds., 1645; R St. Michael's, Queenhithe, London, 1645-6; V Menheniot, Cornwall, 1646-60. - C.R.

108

+Baker, John (fl. 1645-80)

C Strood, Kent, 1645; V Boughton, 1646; V Ewell, 1649; R St. James, Dover, 1650; V Folkestone, 1654-62. - C.R.

91

Ball, John (1585-1640)

Oxf.; C Whitmore, Staffs., 1610-40. - A.O., D.N.B.

"He possessed an admirable talent for explaining difficult texts of scripture, comforting afflicted consciences, and for every duty of the ministerial office." - B,II,440.

62, 72, 78, 102, 128

Balmford, James (b. 1556)

M St. Olave's, Southwark. - D.N.B.

19

Barclay, Robert (1648-1690) - Quaker

149

+Barcroft, John (1609-c.1665)

Camb.; R Broughton Gifford, Wilts., c. 1648-60. - C.R.

"He not only preached twice every Lord's-day, but expounded and catechized, kept up a lecture once a fort-night, and was very charitable to the poor." - P,III,358.

+Barham, Arthur (1618-1692)

Camb.; I St. Olave's, Southwark, 1645; V St. Helen's, Bishopsgate, London, 1647-62. - C.R.

"Upon the indulgence, in 1672, he took out a license, and preached in his own house twice every Lord's-day, catechized in the afternoon, and expounded some portion of scripture in the evening. Besides which, he preached a lecture every Friday, catechized two days a week, and performed family duty every morning and evening in two, and sometimes in three, families besides his own." - P,I,125.

Barnardiston, Sir Nathaniel (1588-1653)

M.P. for Sudbury, Suffolk, 1625-6, 1628, 1640; magistrate and high-sheriff, Ketton, Suffolk. - D.N.B.

"As to catechizing, he saw it was necessary for old people as well as young, in order to the obtaining saving knowledge, that he proposed it to the heads of the families in the town and parish of Ketton (both rich and poor)." Clarke, Lives, p. 113.

+Bartlet, John (c.1600-1680) - Presbyterian
 Camb.; C Barnstaple, 1626; V St. Thomas the Martyr,
 Exeter, 1628; R St. Mary Major, Exeter, there 1648-62. - A.C.,
C.R., D.N.B.
 # 145

+Batchelor, John (d. 1674) - Congregationalist
 Camb.; L Lewisham, Kent, 1641-2; fellow of Eton College,
 1647-62; V Datchet, Bucks., 1658-62. - C.R.
 Calamy records that he wrote the Taste of a catechetical
and preaching exercise, for the instruction of families, etc.

+Bates, William (1625-1699) - Presbyterian
 Camb.; V Tottenham, Middx., 1649; V St. Dunstan's in the
 West, London, there 1654-62. - C.R., D.N.B.
 "When he hath been to consider a case of conscience, I
 have sometimes had opportunity to observe, with what wisdom,
 what caution, what tenderness, he hath spoken to it, and with
 what compass of thought; turning it round this way, and that;
 most strictly regarding our sacred rule, and weighing all
 circumstances that concerned the case." Howe, Works, III, 461.

+Bath, Robert (1604-1674)
 Oxf.; V Rochdale, Lancs., 1635-6-62. - C.R.
 "He spent much time in visiting the sick, advising his
 neighbours, and writing serious letters to distant friends."
 P,II,376.

+Baxter, Richard (1615-1691) - "meer Catholic"
 Head-master at school in Dudley, 1638; A Bridgnorth, Shrops.;
 V Kidderminster, Worcs., 1641-60 (he served as an army chaplain
 and was away sick for several of these years). - C.R., D.N.B.
 Baxter is treated in every chapter.
 # 122, 153, 169

Baynes, Paul (d. 1617)
 Camb.; L Great St. Andrew's Church, Camb. - A.C., D.N.B.
 Cf. Chapter VI for a discussion of his Christian Letters.
 # 37

Belke, Thomas
A.O. lists a Thomas Belke born 1574.
 # 79

+Bennet, Edward (1618-1673)
 Oxf.; C Batcombe, Som.; p Christ Church, London; V South
 Petherton, Som., 1646; R Bratten Symour, Som., 1650; V Morden
 with Charborough, Dorset, 1654-62. - A.O., C.R.
 "He preached 3 times a week in public, expounded the chapters
 he read, and catechized children and young persons." - P,II,139.

Bernard, John
92

Bernard, Richard (1567-1641)

Camb.; V Worksop, Notts., 1601-14; R Batcombe, Som.,
1613-42. - A.C., D.N.B.

"His people, by his constant pains in catechizing, (where-
in he had an excellent facility,) as well as his preaching,
were more than ordinary proficient in the knowledge of the
things of God." - B,II,459.

16, 24, 43, 63

Biddle, John (1615-1662) - Unitarian

Oxf.; master of free school of St. Mary-le-Crypt, Gloucester,
1641-45; later imprisoned. - A.O., D.N.B.

119

+Blackmore, William (1616-1684) - Presbyterian

Oxf.; R Pentloe, Essex, 1645; R St. Peter's, Cornhill, Lon-
don, 1656-62. - A.O., D.N.B.

"He was particularly useful in catechizing youth." - P,I,181.

Blackwood, Christopher (fl. 1644-1655) - Baptist

85

Bolton, Robert (1572-1631)

Oxf.; R Broughton, Northants., 1609-31. - A.O., D.N.B.

"He preached twice everie Lord's daie, and catechized."
Clarke, Marrow of Ecclesiastical History, p. 490.

Bound, Nicholas (d. 1613)

Camb.; R Norfolk, Suffolk, 1585; R St. Andrew the Apostle,
Norwich, 1611-13. - A.C., D.N.B.

"In this book The True Doctrine of the Sabbath (1595)7,
he maintains that the seventh part of our time ought to be
devoted to the service of God; that Christians are bound to
rest on the Lord's day....Such was its reputation, that scare-
ly any comment or catechism was published by the stricter divines,
for many years, in which the morality of the sabbath was not
strongly recommended and enforced." - B,II,171.

Bourne, Immanuel (1590-1679) - Anglican

Oxf.; p St. Christopher's, London; R Ashover, Derby., 1622-
1642; p St. Sepulchre's, London; R Calbourne, Isle of Wight,
1646; R Waltham-on-the-Wolds, Leics., 1656; R Aylestone, 1670-
1679. - D.N.B.

93

Bowles, Edward (1613-1662) - Presbyterian

Camb.; M in York, 1644-60. - A.C., D.N.B.

159

Boyes, John

Camb.; p Halifax, there 1613-20. - Marchant.

"...Mr. Boys, banished out of Kent for his nonconformity, a choice man, very laborious in the work of the Lord, catechized all the poor, expounded to them in the church one day in the week, gave them money; I have his catechism which he taught them." - Heywood, Diaries, IV, 16.

48, 49

Bradshaw, William (1571-1618) - Congregationalist

Camb.; L Chatham, 1601; L Christ Church, Newgate, c. 1605.

A.C., D.N.B.

"And he was indeed a man of eminent Parts,..and dissolving of difficult cases of Conscience...." Clarke, Lives, p. 51.

Brinsley, John (fl. 1663)

Camb.; master of the school at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Lancs.

A.C., D.N.B.

83

+Brooks, Thomas (1608-1680) - Congregationalist

Camb.; chaplain to Rainsborough, admiral of Parliamentary fleet; p St. Thomas Apostles', 1648; R St. Margaret's, New Fish Street, London, 1648-60. - C.R., D.N.B.

He was "an experienced minister, from the heart to the heart; from the conscience to the conscience. He had a body of divinity in his head, and the power of it upon his heart." Grosart, Editor, Works of Thomas Brooks, I, Memoir.

Broxolme, Charles

C Denby, there 1627; M Belper and Darley, Derby., Gunthwaite, Yorks., Denton, Lancs., and Buxton, Derby. - Marchant

129

+Bruce, William (fl. 1660-1672)

C Marbury, Whitchurch, Ches., 1660. - C.R.

"He took abundance of pains in catechizing publicly, and in repeating sermons at his own house every Lord's-day in the evening, and was much lamented when he was ejected." - P.I, 338.

+Buckler, Edward (1600-1693)

Oxf.; M Bradford Abbas, Dorset; R Wyke Regis, Dorset; R Calbourne, Isle of Wight, 1653-62. - C.R.

+Bury, Edward (1616-1700)

Oxf.(?); C Bewdley, Worcs., 1649-50; R Great Bolas, Shrops., 1654-62. - C.R.

137

Bunyan, John (1628-1688)

p Bedford; later imprisoned. - D.N.B.

157

Burch, Dorothy
103

Burton, Henry (1578-1648) - Independent
Camb.; M St. Matthew's, Friday Street, 1642; Tuesday L
St. Mary's, Aldermanbury, till 1645. - A.C., D.N.B.
67, 68

Byfield, Nicholas (1579-1622)
Oxf.; R St. Peter's Church, Chester, before 1611; V
Isleworth, Middx., 1615-22. - A.O., D.N.B.
38, 57

Carpenter, John (d. 1621)
Oxf.; R Northleigh, Devon, 1587-1621. - A.C., D.N.B.
9

Carter, John (1554-1635)
Camb.; V Bramford, Suffolk, 1583; R Belstead, Suffolk,
1617-35. - D.N.B.
60

+Cave, James (d. 1694)
p Crosthwaite, Cumb., 1652-60. - C.R.
"He remained some years at this place, where he studied
hard, and was laborious in preaching and repeating sermons,
instructing and catechizing youth." - P, I, 385.

Cawdrey, Robert
3

Cawdry, Zachary (1616-1684)
Camb.; R Barthomley, Ches., 1649-84. - A.C., D.N.B.
140.

+Chauncey, Isaac (1632-1712) - Congregationalist
Harvard; R Woodborough, Wilts, 1656-60; M to a Congrega-
tional church in Mark Lane, London, 1687-1701. - C.R.
179

+Church, Joseph (d. 1671) - Presbyterian
Camb.; V All Saints, Herts., 1651; R St Catherine Coleman,
London, there 1661. - C.R.
Calamy records that he wrote, "The Christian's Daily Moni-
tor to personal and relative duties; with a resolution of some
cases of conscience: for the benefit of young persons."

+Clarke, Samuel (1599-1683) - Presbyterian
Camb.; L Coventry and Warwick; C Shotwick, Ches.; R Alcester,
Warws., 1633-45; C St. Benet Fink, London, 1642-62. - A.C., D.N.B.

Clifford, John
178

+Collinges, John (1623-1690) - Presbyterian
Camb.; chaplain to Isaac Wyncol of Bures, Essex, 1645;
V St. Saviour's, 1646-53, and St. Stephen's, Norwich, 1654-62.
A.C., C.R., D.N.B.

"One mighty in the scriptures, an excellent casuist, an
unwearied preacher, and a patient sufferer.+ - P,III,9.

Cook or Cooke, William (1612-1684)
Camb. (?); V Wroxhall, Warws., 1641; M Ashby-de-la-Zouch,
Leics.; C St. Michael's, Chester, there 1651-62. - C.R.

"He usually set apart one afternoon every week to visit the
families of his congregation, to catechize their children and
servants, and discourse with them personally about their souls."
P,I,326.

Crashaw, William (1572-1626)
Camb.; canon of Ripon, 1604-26, and York, 1617-26; V
St. Mary, Whitechapel, London, 1618-26. - D.N.B., Marchant.
39

+Crofton, Zachary (1626-1672) - Presbyterian
Trinity, Dublin; C Newcastle under Lyme, Staffs., 1646; V
Dilhorne, Staffs., 1649; C Wrenbury, Ches., 1650; R St. James,
Garlickhithe, London, 1651; R Graseley, Herts., 1654; C St.
Botolph's, Aldgate, London, 1655-60. - C.R., D.N.B.
125

Crooke, Samuel (1575-1649)
Camb.; R Wrington, Som., 1602-49. - A.C., D.N.B.
Cf. Chapter I for reference to his counselling ability.

+Crow, Francis (1627-1692) - Presbyterian
Edinburgh; V Hundon, Suffolk, 1662; p Ovington, Essex, and
Bury St. Edmunds after ejection. - C.R., D.N.B.
"He was very diligent in catechizing both children and adult
persons that were ignorant." - P,III,266.

Davenport, John (1597-1670)
Oxf.; V St. Stephen's, Coleman Street, London; co-pastor
at English church in Amsterdam, 1634-5; emigrated to New
England. - A.O., D.N.B.
Cf. Chapter VI for examples of his pastoral letters.
135

+Day, George (d.1697)
Oxf.; V Wiveliscombe, Som., 1661-2; P Ratcliffe, Middx.,
1672-97. - C.R.
180

Denison, Stephen
40

Dent, Arthur (d.1607)

Camb.; R South Shoebury, Essex, 1580-1607. - A.C., D.N.B.
10, 14, 15

Dering, Edward (1540?-1576)

Camb.; C Tower of London; prebendary of Salisbury, 1571.
A.C., D.N.B.
1

Dod, John (1549?-1645)

Camb.; R Hanwell, Oxf.; R Fawsley, Northants., 1624-45.
Cf. Chapter VI for examples of his pastoral letters.
34, 58

+Doolittle (1632-1707)

Camb.; P St. Alphage, London Wall, 1653-62; conducted a school at Moorfields and other places after ejection; delivered a catechetical lecture every Wednesday at Monkwell Street, London. - C.R., P.
150, 167, 172, 177

Downname, John (1571-1652)

Camb.; V St. Olave's Jewry, London, 1599-1602; R St. Margaret, Lathbury, 1602-18; R All Hallows, Thomas Street, London, 1630-52. - A.C., D.N.B.
He wrote devotional literature.

Drake, John

18

+Durant, Robert (d.1679)

R Risby, Lincs., 1662; licensed at Sheffield, 1672. - C.R.
"It was his common method on the Lord's-day, to spend the morning in expounding the scriptures, wherein he discovered great skill in casuistical divinity." - P,II,414

Dyke, Jeremiah (d.1620?)

Camb.; R Epping, Essex, 1609-20. - B, D.N.B.
80

Egerton, Stephen (1555?-1621) - Presbyterian

Camb.; R St. Anne's, Blackfrairs, 1598-1621. - A.C., B, D.N.B.
7

Ellis, Clement (1630-1700) - Anglican

Oxf.; R Kirby, Notts. - A.O.
173

Elton, Edward

p Barmondsey.
30

+Fairclough, Richard (1621-1682)

Camb.; R Mells, Som., 1647-62; p Bristol. - C.R.

"His labours were almost incredible;...his usual exercises on the Lord's-day were praying, reading the scriptures, presching, catechizing, and administering the sacraments...." P,III,199.

+Fairclough, Samuel (1594-1677)

Father of last; Camb.; L Lynn Regis, 1619; R Barnardiston, 1623; R Kedington, Suffolk, 1629-62. - A.C., C.R.

"He catechized young and old, visited all in his parish once a month, enquiring into the state of their souls, counseling and directing them as there was occasion." - P,I,283.

Fenner, William (1600-1640)

Camb.; C Sedgley, Staffs., 1627; M Rochford, Essex, 1629-1640. - A.C., B.

He wrote, A Treatise of Conscience.

+Flavell, John (1630?-1691) - Presbyterian

Oxf.; C and R Diptford, Devon, there 1650; L St. Saviour's, Dartmouth, and Townstall, Devon, 1652-62; p Dartmouth, 1672. C.R., D.N.B.

174

Foorte, John

52

Ford, Simon (1619?-1699)

Oxf.; V St. Laurence, Reading, All Saints, Northampton, and St. Mary, Aldermanbury; V Old Swinford, 1676-91. - A.O., D.N.B.

126, 130

+Ford, Stephen (d.1694) - Congregationalist

R Ford, Northumb., 1655; V Chipping Norton, Oxon., 1659-60; p London, 1672: "Here he held a catechetical lecture for young men at 7 in the morning on Lord's-days, and afterwards changed it to the evening; which it is to be hoped did much good." P,III,121; C.R., D.N.B.

+Frankland, Richard (1630-1698) - Presbyterian

Camb.; C Auchland St. Andrews, Durham; had an academy at Rathmell, and other places, 1670-89. - C.R.

"He always expounded the scripture on the Lord's-day morning before sermon; and besides preaching in the afternoon, catechized the youth, and explained to them the principles of religion in a familiar way." - P,II,177.

+Franklyn, Robert (1630-1684)

Camb.; R Kirton, 1651; C Blythburgh; V Westhall, Suffolk, 1658-62; p in London during the plague. - C.R., D.N.B.

He wrote pastoral letters and a catechism.

Frost, John (1626-1657)

Camb.; P St. Olave's, London. - D.N.B.

"He was ever solicitous to perform all the duties of his office, by preaching, administering the sacraments, catechizing the youth, and visiting the sick." - B,III,291.

*Gataker, Thomas (1574-1654)

Camb.; p Lincoln's Inn, 1601; R Rotherhithe, 1611-54. -

A.C.

55

Geree, John (1600-1649)

Oxf.; M Tewkesbury, 1621-24; R St. Albans, Herts., 1645-1647; P St. Faith's, London, 1647-49. - A.O., B, D.N.B.

109

Geree, Stephen (1594-c.1656)

Oxf.; V Womersley, and R Abingdon, Surrey; he was elder brother of last. - A.O., B.

He wrote a treatise on cases of conscience, The Golden Meane.

*Goode, William

M Denton, Norfolk.

94

+Goodwin, John (1594?-1655) - Arminian

Camb.; V St. Stephen's, Coleman Street, 1633-62. - D.N.B.

142

+Gouge, Thomas (1605-1681)

Camb.; C St. Anne's, Blackfriars, 1628-31; C Teddington, Middx., 1637-8; R Coulsdon, Surrey, 1638; V St. Sepulchre's, Holborn, London, 1638-62. - A.C., C.R., D.N.B.

"Every morning thro' the year, he catechized in the church, chiefly the poorer sort, who were generally the ignorant, and especially the aged, who had more leisure. To encourage them to come for instruction, he once a week distributed money among them; but changed the day, to oblige them to a constant attendance." - P,I,184.

144

*Gouge, William (1575-1653)

Father of last; Camb.; R St. Anne's, Blackfriars, 1621-1653. - A.C., B, D.N.B.

Cf. Chapter I for mention of his counselling ability.

28

Granger, Thomas

31

Greaves, Thomas (1612-1676)

Oxf.; held livings in Northamptonshire. - D.N.B.

127

+Gregory, Alexander (1594-1666)

Oxf.; V Camberwell, Surrey, 1643; R Lambeth, 1646; C Cirencester, Glos., 1632-62. - A.O., C.R.

"He kept up a weekly lecture every Tuesday, and on Thursdays in the afternoon he catechized in his own house, taking great care not to discourage such as were bashful, or had bad memories, for whom he was so solicitously concerned, that he would often follow them to their houses, (even the meanest in his parish) to give them private instruction in a plain and familiar way." - P,II,232.

+Hall, Thomas (1610-1665)

Oxf.; C King's Norton, 1629-62. - C.R., D.N.B.

"He constantly preached twice on the Lord's-day, and held lectures abroad, besides his exposition, catechizing, private admonition, etc." - P,III,412.

*Hammond, Henry (1605-1660) - Anglican

Oxf.; R Penshurst, 1633; arch-deacon of Chichester, 1643.

D.N.B.

95

Henry, Matthew (1662-1714)

Doolittle's academy; M Chester, 1687-1712. - D.N.B.

Cf. Chapter III for reference to his catechizing.

182, 183

+Henry, Philip (1631-1696) - Presbyterian

Father of last; Oxf.; C Worthenbury, Bangor, Flints., 1657-1661; p Broad Oak, Flints. - C.R., D.N.B.

Cf. Chapter III for reference to his catechizing, and Chapter VI for an account of his pastoral letter writing.

Herbert, William (fl. 1634-1663)

Author of pious manuals. - D.N.B.

113.

Herring, Julines (1582-1644)

Camb.; V Calke, Derby., 1610-18; p Shrewsbury, 1618; p English church in Amsterdam, 1637-44. - D.N.B.

Cf. Chapter I, reference is made there to his ability to handle cases of conscience.

+Hieron, John (1608-1682)

Camb.; master of school in Norfolk, 1629; chaplain to Sir H. Leigh of Eggington, 1631; R Breadsall, Derby., 1645-62; p Losco, 1672. - C.R.

"Besides preaching twice every Lord's-day, he expounded the scripture, and catechized. He taught publicly, and from house to house...he was compassionate in dealing with troubled souls." - P,I,393.

- Hieron, Samuel (1576?-1617)
 Camb.; R Modbury, Devon. - D.N.B.
 # 12
- Hinde, William (1569?-1629)
 Oxf.; C Bunbury, Ches., 1603-29. - D.N.B.
 # 22
- +Hodges, Thomas (1617-1688)
 Camb.; R Souldern, Oxon., 1647-61. - C.R.
 # 132
- Hooker, Thomas (1586?-1647)
 Camb.; R Esher, Surrey, 1620; L Chelmsford, there 1629;
 went to Netherlands, 1630; emigrated to New England, 1633.- D.N.B.
 Mather writes: "He had a singular ability at giving answers to Cases of Conscience." Magnali, Bk. III, 65.
- +Horne, John (1614-1676)
 Camb.; p Sutton St. James, Lincs.; R All Hallows, South Lynn, Norfolk, 1643-62. - C.R., D.N.B.
 # 161
- Horne, Robert (1565-1640)
 Chaplain at St. Magdalene Hall, Oxf. - D.N.B.
 # 23
- +Hughes, George (1603-1667) * Presbyterian
 Oxf.; L All Hallows, Bread Street, London, 1635; chaplain to Lord Brooke at Warwick Castle; V Tavisstock, 1638; V St. Andrew's, Plymouth, 1643-62. - C.R., D.N.B.
 He was "an acute disputant, and a judicious casuist; as a great number of letters shewed, found among his papers, upon the nicest cases which he had been consulted about." - P, II, 56.
 Cf. Chapter III for his method of Sunday afternoon catechizing; it is extracted from Palmer.
- Hunt, Richard
 Camb.
 # 116
- Jacob, Henry (1563-1624) - Congregationalist
 Oxf.; M in Netherlands, England, and Virginia. - D.N.B., B.
 # 13
- Jaggard, W.
 # 25
- Jenison, Robert (1584?-1652)
 Camb.; first master of St. Mary Magdalene's Hospital, Newcastle, 1619-52; V St. Nicholas, Newcastle, 1645-52. - D.N.B.
 # 56

+Jephcott, Jonathan (1609-1673)

Oxf.; C Shilton, Warws.; V St. Mary's, Swaffham Prior, Cambs., 1633-62. - C.R.

"He was earnestly desirous of settling some Christian discipline in the church for promoting knowledge and holiness. With this view, he had stated meetings with the neighbouring ministers....Finding that many would not be at pains of learning the Assembly's Catechism, they drew up one much shorter, for the use of the most ignorant in their parishes.* - P.

+Jessey, Henry (1601-1663) - Baptist

Camb.; V Aughton, Yorks., 1633-4; P in Southwark, 1637; teacher of a Baptist church in Swan Alley, Coleman Street, London; L St. George's Southwark, Surrey, 1661. - C.R., D.N.B.

117

Jones, Richard

4

Keach, Benjamin (1640-1704)

p Winslow; P Tooley Street, London, 1668; p Goat Yard Passage, Horsleydown, London, from 1672. - D.N.B.

141, 181

Love, Christopher (1618-1651)

Oxf.; M St. Lawrence, Jewry, London; executed, 1651. - A.O.

120

+Lye, Thomas (1621-1684)

Oxf.; master of Bury St. Edmunds School, Suffolk, 1647; V Chard, 1648; R All Hallows, Lombard Street, London, 1658-62. C.R.

"He was eminently useful by his excellent art of catechizing youth, whom by many artifices he entices to delight in getting knowledge in the best things. Many in and about London recounted with pleasure, as long as they lived, his unusual method of instructing them in the first principles of religion; and several owed their first serious impressions to his catechetical exercises." - P, I, 84.

138, 139, 147, 158

Lyford, William (1598-1653)

Oxf.; M Sherborn, Dorset. - D.N.B.

"He fed the lambs in Christ's flock, and possessed an excellent talent for catechizing youth, wherein he was eminently useful." - B, III, 161.

81

Moore, William

97

Openshaw, Robert

M Weymouth and Melcombe Regis, Dorset.

2

Owen, John (1616-1683)

Oxf.; R Fordham, Essex, 1643; R Coggeshall, 1646; chaplain to Cromwell; dean of Christ Church, 1651-60; vice-chancellor of Oxford, 1652-8. - C.R., D.N.B.

Cf. Chapter VI for examples of his pastoral letters.

98

*Palmer, Herbert (1601-1647)

Camb.; R Ashwell, 1632; L Westminster Abbey, 1643; president of Queen's College, Camb., 1644. - A.C., D.N.B.

74

+Parr, Edward (1628-1701)

Oxf.; R Rowe, Devon, 1651-62; p after ejection. - C.R.

"He afterwards preached at Buckerwall and Aldscomb, and took great pains, with good success, in catechizing little children and young persons grown up." - P,II,68.

Parr, Elnathan (d.1632?)

Camb.; R Palgrave. - D.N.B.

26

Peck, Francis

86

Perkins, William (1558-1602)

Camb.; L Great St. Andrew's Church, Camb.

Cf. Chapter I for a discussion of Perkins's role in the development of the Puritan cure of souls. Cf. Chapter III for a discussion of his catechism and its place in Puritan catechizing.

6

Peters, Hugh (1598-1660) - Independent

Camb.; L St. Sepulchre's, London; went to Holland, 1629; emigrated to New England, 1635, but returned to England, 1641; chaplain under Cromwell; executed 1660. - D.N.B.

75

+Pinckney, John (1620-1680)

Oxf.; V Denton and Bemerton, Wilts., there 1655; V Longstock, Hants, 1661-2; p Longstock. - C.R.

"While Mr. Pinckney was in his place, he not only taught his people by public preaching and catechizing, but instructed them privately from house to house." - P,II,119.

+Porter, Robert (1624-1690)

Camb.; V Pentrich, Derby., 1650-62; p Nottingham, 1672.

C.R., D.N.B.

"He was abundant in prayer, preaching, and catechizing, and visiting from house to house." - P,I,422.

+Prime, Edward (1633-1708) - Presbyterian

Camb.; C Baslow, Derby., 1654; A Sheffield, 1656-62. - C.R.

"He had a warm heart, and a clear, methodical, casuistical head, by the help of which he went further into several points than most." - P,III,449.

Ram, Robert (fl. 1643-1655)

Trinity College, Dublin; M Spalding. - D.N.B.

87, 123.

Randall, John (1570-1622)

Oxf.; R St. Andrew Hubbard, London, 1599-1622. - D.N.B.

64

Ratcliffe, Thomas (d.1599)

Camb.

42

+Reyner, Edward (1600-1662?)

Camb.; R St. Peter at Arches, Lincoln, 1627-62. - C.R.,

D.N.B.

"That his ministry might be more effectual, he reduced it into a catechetical way, which was his evening exercise." P,II,421.

+Reynolds, John (1632-1683)

Oxf.; C Whitacre, Warws., 1654; M Wolverhampton, Staffs., 1656-60; member of the Worcestershire Association. - C.R.

"He was solid, quick, and judicious, in handling controversial matters; very ready in resolving scruples of conscience." P,III,246.

Richardson or Richerdson, John (d.1625)

Camb.; Regius professor of divinity, Camb., 1617; master of Peterhouse, Camb., 1609-15. - A.C., D.N.B.

44, 45, 46

+Rock, Josiah (fl. 1656-1672)

Camb.; C Rowley Regis, Clent, Staffs., 1655; R Saundby, Notts., 1656-62; member of the Worcestershire Association.

C.R.

"One of great diligence and success in catechizing." - P,III,105.

Rogers, Daniel (1573-1652)

Camb.; M Haversham; L Wethersfield. - D.N.B.

70

Rogers, Ezekiel

Camb.; chaplain to Sir Francis Barrington of Hatfield, Broad Oak, Essex; R Rowley, 1621-38; emigrated to New England.
82

+Rogers, John (1610-1680)

Oxf.; p Middleton, Cheney, Northants., and Leigh, Kent; R Croglin, Cumberland, 1661-2; p Durham, 1672. - C.R., D.N.B.
"Those who were ignorant he conversed much with, gave them good books, catechized and instructed them, till he thought them qualified for that sacred solemnity Lord's Supper" - P

+Scandrett, Stephen (1631?-1706) - Presbyterian

Oxf.; Conduct of Trinity, Camb., 1659-60; p Waterbeach, Cambs. - C.R.
154

+*Seaman, Lazarus (d.1675)

Camb.; L St. Martin's, Ludgate; R All Hallows, Bread Street, London, 1642-62; President of Sion College, Camb., 1651-3; vice-chancellor of Camb., 1653-4. - A.C., D.N.B.
"He was a most excellent and profound casuist. Scarcely any divine in London was so sought to for resolving cases of conscience as Dr. S." - P, I, 80.

*Sedgewick, Obadiah (1600-1658)

Oxf.; chaplain to Sir Horace Vere; R Coggeshall, Essex, 1639-41; R St. Andrew's, Holborn, London, 1645-6; R St. Paul's Covent Garden, London, 1646-56. - B, D.N.B.
111

+Shaw or Shawe, John (1608-1672)

Camb.; chaplain to Philip Herbert; L Brompton, Derby., 1630; V Rotherham, 1639; chaplain to Henry Rich, 1641; R Lymm, Ches., 1643; R Scrayningham, Yorks.; L Holy Trinity, Hull, 1651-62; royal chaplain. - C.R., D.N.B.
Cf. Chapter III for an account of his catechizing.

+Sheffield, John (c.1602-1680) - Presbyterian

Camb.; C Felmersham, Bed., 1623; R Careby, Lincs.; V Tonbridge, Kent, 1647; R St. Swithin's, London, 1647-60; p Enfield, Middx. - C.R., D.N.B.
He wrote, A Good Conscience the Strongest Hold (1650) and a catechism. - P

Sibbes, Richard (1577-1635)

Camb.; L Trinity Church, Camb., 1610-15; p Gray's Inn, 1617-1635; Master of St. Catherine's, Camb., 1626-35; V Holy Trinity, Camb., 1633-5; - A.C., D.N.B.
He spoke "with authority and power to mens Consciences." Clarke, Lives, p. 144.

+Slater, Samuel

Perhaps the Congregationalist of that name who was L St. Katherine's by the Tower, London, 1628-61. - C.R.

88

Sprint, John (d.1623) - Anglican

Oxf.; V Thornbury, 1610. - D.N.B.

17

+Stalham, John (d.1681) - Congregationalist

Camb.; p Norwich, 1626; V Terling, Essex, 1632-62. - C.R., D.N.B.

89

+Staunton, Edmund (1600-1671)

R Bushey, Herts., 1627, after leaving Oxf.; V Kingston on Thames, 1632; President of Corpus Christi College, Oxf., 1648-1660. - C.R., D.N.B.

"He constantly catechized the juniors publicly every Saturday." - P,I,221.

+Stephenson or Stevenson, James (1604-1685)

Glasgow; M in Ireland; R Tormarton, Glos., 1645-6; V Martock, Som., 1654-62. - C.R.

Remembered by the people of Martock for his "preaching and catechizing their children in public and in private, and other ministerial services." - P,III,196.

+Stockton, Owen (1630-1680) - Presbyterian

Camb.; L St. Andrew's Church, Camb., 1656; L Colchester, 1657-61; p here after ejection: "he frequently expounded, catechized the youth, and resolved cases of conscience." - P,II,191.

148

+Street, Stephen (1620-1663)

Oxf.; P Hurstpierpoint, 1646; R Buxted, Sussex, 1646-60. C.R.

"He took great pains in preaching and catechizing the youth, and was charitable to the poor." - P,II,340.

+Strickland, John (1601-1670)

Oxf.; A Dorchester; R Podimore Milton, Som., 1632; R St. Peter Poor, 1643-47; R St. Edmund's, Salisbury, 1641-62. - C.R.

"He was eminent for expounding the scripture, and an excellent casuist." - P,III,372.

+Stubbs, Henry (1606?-1678)

Oxf.; R Partney, Lincs., V St. Philip and St. Jacob, Bristol, 1647; M St. Cuthbert's, Wells, 1652-60. - C.R., D.N.B.

"He spent more time in catechizing and instructing young people than most men." - P,II,239.

+Sylvester, Matthew (1636?-1708)

Camb.; V Gt. Gonerby, Lincs., 1659-62; p London, 1672.

C.R., D.N.B.

"He was an able divine, a good linguist, no mean philosopher, an excellent casuist, an admirable textuary, and of uncommon divine eloquence in pleading at the throne of Grace." P,II,419.

Taylor, Thomas

118

+Thoroughgood, Nicholas (1621-1691)

Oxf.; chaplain to Earl of Warwick; V Hawkhurst, 1645; V Monkton, Kent, 1651-62. - C.R.

While chaplain at sea, he "preached and catechized every Lord's-day." - P,II,340.

+Tombes, John (1603?-1676) - Baptist

Oxf.; L St. Martin, Carfax, 1624-30; C Bewdly, 1646; V Leonminster, 1630-42, 1649-62. - C.R., D.N.B.

136

+Tomlyns, Samuel (b.1631)

Camb.; R Crawley, Hants., 1655-62. - C.R.

"A man of great gravity and wisdom, and a good casuist." P,II,263.

Trosse, George (1631-1713)

Oxf.; M in Exeter after ejection. - C.R.

Cf. Chapter III for his method of catechizing as related by his biographer. Palmer writes: "He also had a great deal of work in private. He had an excellent faculty in resolving doubts and comforting afflicted consciences, and in assisting such as were going out of the world." - P,II,100.

+*Tuckney, Anthony (1599-1670)

Camb.; M Boston, Lincs., 1629-60; Master of Emmanuel College, Camb., 1645-8; Regius professor of divinity, 1655-6. C.R.

"He had a considerable hand in the Assembly's Confession and Catechisms. Many of the answers in the larger catechism, particularly on the Commandments, were his." - P,I,264.

64

Twisse, Thomas

32

*Twisse, William (1575-1646)

Oxf.; R Newington, Longueville; V Newbury, 1620. - D.N.B.

69

Vesey, Henry
M in Essex.
27

+Vincent, Nathaniel (1639?-1697) - Presbyterian
Oxf.; C Langley Marish, Wraysbury, Bucks., 1650-62; p
London and Southwark, 1666-69. - C.R., D.N.B.
163, 169

+Vincent, Thomas (1634-1678)
Brother of last; Oxf.; R St. Mary Magdalen, Milk Street,
London, 1657-62; M London during the plague. - C.R., D.N.B.
151

+Wadsworth, Thomas (1630-1676)
Camb.; R St. Mary's, Newington, 1653-60; C St. Lawrence,
Pountney, London, 1661-2; p Theobalds, Herts. and in South-
wark. - C.R., D.N.B.
162

+Wales, Elkanah (1588-1669)
Camb.; C Pudsey, Calverley, Yorks., 1615-62. - C.R., Mar-
chant.
"He laboured mightily in the word and doctrine, in pray-
ing, catechizing, and expounding." - P.

*Walker, George (1581?-1651)
Camb.; R St. John Evangelist, Watling Street, London, 1614-
1651. - D.N.B.
77

*Wallis, John (1616-1703)
Camb., chaplain to Mary Vere in London; famed as a mathe-
matician. - D.N.B.
115

+Ward, Ralph (1631-1692) - Congregationalist
Camb.; army chaplain; R Wolsingham, Durham, 1653; V Hart-
burn, Northumb., 1655-60; kept a school in York after ejection.
C.R.

"He had days of conference with his people, and of answer-
ing questions in divinity. He had also set times of philos-
ophical disputations with some young scholars who lived in the
city; besides his diligence in catechizing youth, calling par-
ents and masters to that work, visiting the sick, and resolving
the doubts of many." - P, III, 67.

Ward, William
59

+Warren, John (1621-1696) - Congregationalist
 Camb.; V Hatfield Broad Oak, Essex, 1646-62; formed a Congregational church at Hatfield, 1665, there in 1690. - C.R.
 # 121

+Watson, Thomas (d. 1686) - Presbyterian
 Camb.; chaplain to Mary Vere; R St. Stephen's, Walbrook, London, 1646-1662; p London, 1662-80. - C.R., D.N.B.
 # 175

Webbe, Richard
 # 50

*Whitaker, Jeremiah or Jeremy (1599-1654)
 Camb.; taught school at Oakham, Ruts.; p Stretton; R St. Mary Magdalen, Bermondsey, Southwark; L Westminster Abbey. - A.C., B., D.N.B.
 He was "excellently versed in cases of Conscience." - Clarke, Lives.

Whitaker, William
 Perhaps the Calvinist Master of St. John's College, Camb., who d. 1595. - D.N.B.
 # 65

*White, John (1576-1648)
 Oxf.; R Holy Trinity, Dorchester, 1606-42; R Lambeth, 1643. - D.N.B.
 # 53, 71

Wilcox or Wilcocks, Thomas (1549-1608) - Presbyterian
 Oxf.; M Honey Lane, London. - B., D.N.B.
 "Many of the letters written by Mr. Wilcocks were answers to cases of conscience. He was highly celebrated for his knowledge of casuistical divinity." - B.II, 185.

*Wilkinson, Henry (1566-1647) -
 Oxf.; M Waddesdon, Bucks., 1601-47. - A.O., B.
 # 54

Willet, Andrew (1562-1621) - Moderate Presbyterian
 Camb.; prebendary of Ely, 1587; R Barley, 1599-1621. - B., D.N.B.
 "...he constantly preached three times a week, and catechized both old and young throughout his parish...his sermons and catechetical instructions were dressed in so plain and familiar a style, that persons of the weakest capacity might easily understand him." - B.II, 284.

+Wilmot, Nathaniel (fl. 1643-1672)

C Leeds, 1643; V Benenden, 1646; V Faversham, Kent, 1652-1662; P Dover after 1672. - C.R.

"He by his labour in preaching and catechizing, etc. wrought a great reformation" in Faversham. - P.II,326.

Wilson, Thomas (1601-1653)

Camb.; T Chartwood, Surrey; M Capel, Surrey, Farlington, near Portsmouth, and Teddington, near Kingston-upon-Thames. - B.

"He took up catechizing in the week-days in public; and this he continued till he had gone through all the town." - Clarke, Lives, p. 33.

+Winter, Samuel (1603-1666) - Congregationalist

R St. Michael, Ousebridge, York, 1641; R Cottingham, York, 1643; Provost Trinity College, Dublin, 1651-60. - C.R.

"He preached twice every Lord's-day in public, expounded the chapters which he read, and catechized the younger persons." P,III,134.

Wolfall, Thomas

M Staunton, Northumb.

106.

+Woodbridge, Benjamin (1622-1684)

Oxf.; Harvard; R Newbury, 1648-62; p Newbury, Berks., after ejection. - C.R., D.N.B.

"...he succeeded Dr. Twiss at Newbury, where he had a mighty reputation as a scholar, a preacher, a casuist, and a Christian." P,I,289.

Woodward, Joseph (d.1660)

R Dursley, Glos.: "he preached twice every Lord's-day, expounding in the morning, and catechizing in the afternoon, before sermon." - C.R., P,II,234.

Worthington, John (1618-1671)

Camb.; Master of Jesus College, 1650; R Fen Ditton, Camb., 1654-63; vice-chancellor of Camb., 1657-8; M Barking and Needham, Suffolk; p St. Benet-Fink, London, 1664. - D.N.B.

152

APPENDIX B

A PARTIAL LIST OF SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

PURITAN CATECHETICAL WRITINGS

The Puritan catechetical writings appearing here were all written, published or republished in the seventeenth century. Each entry appears in an abridged form, in lower case letters, and by author and title. Each work is listed under the date of its first edition and includes in brackets, the number of editions or impressions it went through during this century. When the date of the first edition is unknown, a work is listed under the date of a known edition, or in the year of the author's death. Each entry is numbered and appears but once. The only exceptions to this are the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, abbreviated L.C. and S.C. respectively. They are entered under each year of publication, but numbered only once. This list is confined to all catechetical writings printed in England; it does not include works printed in Scotland or New England. Unless otherwise indicated, the place of publication is London. Three sources were used in this compilation: personal examination of many catechetical writings in the British Museum and the Dr. Williams's Library, London, the Bodleian Library, Oxford, the Emmanuel College Library, Cambridge, the John Rylands Library, Manchester, and the National Library, New College Library, and the University of Edinburgh Library, Edinburgh; biographies, particularly Samuel Palmer's Nonconformist Memorial and the

Dictionary of National Biography, edited by Sir L. Stephen and Sir S. Lee; and the bibliographies of Alexander F. Mitchell, Catechisms of the Second Reformation, William Carruthers, The Shorter Catechism, A.W. Pollard and G.R. Redgrave, A Short-Title Catalogue, 1475-1640, Donald Wing, Short-Title Catalogue, 1641-1700, and S.W. Carruthers, Three Centuries of the Westminster Shorter Catechism. All entries bearing an asterisk before their title are listed by S.W. Carruthers as being in some way related to the Shorter Catechism.

- 1572
1. Edward Dering, A briefe and necessarie catechisme or instruction. (1)
- 1579
2. Robert Openshaw, Short questions and answeres conteining the summe of Christian religion. (10)
- 1580
3. Robert Cawdrey, A short and fruitefull treatise of the profite of catechizing. (1)
- 1583
4. Richard Jones, A briefe and necessarie catechisms. (3)
- 1587
5. Ursinus Zacharias, The summe of Christian religion: Oxford. (5)
- 1590
6. William Perkins, The foundation of Christian religion gathered into sixe principles: London and Cambridge. (10)
- 1593
7. Stephen Egerton, A briefe methode of catechizing. (32)
- 1600
8. N.A., Certaine briefe questions and answers concerning points of Christian religion. (1)

1601

9. John Carpenter, Contemplations for the institution of children in the Christian religion. (1)
10. Arthur Dent, The plaine man's pathway to heaven. (25)

1602

11. R.C., A briefe and necessarie catechisme concerning the principall points of Christian religion. (1)

1604

12. Samuel Hieron, The doctrine of the beginning of Christ. (15)
13. Henry Jacob, Catechism. (1)

1606

14. Arthur Dent, A pastime for parents. (4)
15. ———. A plaine exposition of the articles of our faith. (1)

1607

16. Richard Bernard, A double catechism: Cambridge. (2)
17. John Sprint, The summe of Christian religion, comprehended in six principall questions. (2)

1609

18. Thomas Drake, The sicke-mans catechisme, or pathway to felicitie. (1)

1610

19. James Balmford, A short catechisme, sixth edition. (6)

1612

20. William Ames, The chiefe heads of divinitie. (1)

1613

21. Samuel Crooke, The guide unto true happinesse. (6)
22. William Hinde, A path to pietie. (2)
23. Robert Horne, Points of instruction for the ignorant. (2)

1614

24. Richard Bernard, Josuahs resolution for the well ordering of his household. (2)
25. W. Jaggard, A short catechism for householders. (2)
26. Elnathan Parr, The grounds of divinitie. (8)
27. Henry Vesey, The scope of the scripture. (4)

1615

28. William Gouge, A short catechisme, wherein are briefly laid downe the fundamentall principles of Christian religion. (8)
29. R.R., The householders helpe for domesticall discipline. (1)

1616

- 30. Edward Elton, A forme of catechising. (10)
- 31. Thomas Granger, The tree of good and evill, or a profitable and familiar exposition of the commandements. (1)
- 32. Thomas Twisse, A handfull of goates-haire: that is, certaine principles of Christian religion, easie for beginners to understand, and to remember. (1)

1617

- 33. E.B., A catechisme with a treatise concerning catechizing. (1)
- 34. John Dod, Pasadges of Mr. Dods droppings. (General MSS 1.4.2, Dr. Williams's Library)
- 35. J.F., The necessity and antiquity of catechising. (1)
- 36. John Syme, The sweete milke of Christian doctrine. (1)

1618

- 37. Paul Baynes, A helpe to true happinesse. (3)
- 38. Nicholas Byfield (the preface is signed Adoniram Byfield), The principles or the pattern of wholesome words. (6)
- 39. William Crashaw, Milke for babes, or a north country catechisme. (6)
- 40. Stephen Denison, A compendious catechisme. (7)

1619

- 41. Anonymous, The elements of the beginning of the oracles of God. (1)
- 42. Thomas Ratcliffe, A short summe of the whole catechism. (2)

1621

- 43. Richard Bernard, The common catechisme. (9)
- 44. John Richardson or Richerdson, A short and briefe summe of the saving knowledge. (1)
- 45. _____. His catechisme. (Emmanuel College Library MSS)
- 46. _____. The manuscript of Mr Richerdson on divinity. (Modern MSS No. 2, Dr. Williams's Library)
- 47. Andrew Willet, An English catechism.

1622

- 48. John Boyes, The Christian horne booke or A.B.C. (Additional MSS 4928, British Museum)
- 49. _____. The poore man box or six principles. (Additional MSS 4928, British Museum)
- 50. Richard Webbe, A key of knowledge for catechizing children in Christ. (1)

1623

- 51. William Attersall, The principles of Christian religion. (2)
- 52. John Foorte, The apostles catechisme consisting of sixe articles plainly expounded. (1)

53. John White, A plaine and familiar exposition upon the Creed, Ten Commandments, Lord's Prayer and sacraments. (3)
 54. Henry Wilkinson, A catechism for the use of the congregation of Wadston. (3)

1624

55. Thomas Gataker, A short catechisme for the simpler sort. (1)
 56. Robert Jenison, Directions for the worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper. (1)

1625

57. Nicholas Byfield, The principall grounds of Christian religion. (1)

1627

58. John Dod, A briefe dialogue concerning preparation for the worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper. (2)
 59. William Ward, Short grounds of a catechisme: Cambridge. (1)

1628

60. John Carter, Winter-evenings communication with young novices in religion: Cambridge. (1)
 61. Anthony Tuckneye, A briefe & pithy catechisme as it was delivered in Emmanuel College chappell. (Emmanuel College Library MSS III.1.13)

1629

62. John Ball, A short treatise contayning all the principall grounds of Christian religion, seventh edition. (15)

1630

63. Richard Bernard, Good Christian looke to thy creed. (1)
 64. John Randall, Catechistical lectures. (1)
 65. William Whitaker, A short summe of Christianity. (1)

1631

66. Richard Alleine, A breefe explanation of the common catechism, second edition. (2)
 67. Henry Burton, A briefe catechetical exposition of Christian doctrine. (2)
 68. . Grounds of Christian religion. (3)
 69. William Trisse, A briefe catechetical exposition of Chritian doctrine. (2)

1632

70. Daniel Rogers, A practical catechism. (3)
 71. John White, A short catechisme, seventh edition. (7)

1639

72. John Ball, Short questions and answers explaining the catechisme. (1)

1640

- 73. W.L., An helpe for yong people, preparing them for the worthy receiving of the Lord's Supper. (1)
- 74. Herbert Palmer, An endeavor of making the principles of Christian religion easie: Cambridge. (6)

1641

- 75. Hugh Peters, Milke for babes, and meat for men. (1)
- 76. D.V., The enlargement of a former catechism which contained in brieft the grounds and principles of Christian religion. (1)
- 77. George Walker, The key of saving knowledge. (1)

1642

- 78. John Ball, A short catechism, nineteenth edition. (56)
- 79. Thomas Belke, A scripture enquiry. (1)
- 80. Jeremiah Dyke, A worthy communicant. (17)
- 81. William Lyford, Principles of faith & good conscience: Oxford. (5)
- 82. Ezekiel Rogers, The chiefe grounds of Christian religion. (2)

1643

- 83. John Brinsley, Jr., A breviat of saving knowledge. (1)

1644

- 84. Anonymous, Short principles of religion. (1)
- 85. Christopher Blackwood, A soul-searching catechism. (2)
- 86. Francis Peck, The kernall of Christianity. (2)
- 87. Robert Ram, The souldiers catechisme. (9)
- 88. Samuel Slater, The two covenants from Sinai and Sion. (1)
- 89. John Stalham, A catechisme for children in yeeres and children in understanding. (2)

1645

- 90. Anonymous, A short catechisme for the instruction of the inhabitants of S.M. (1)
- 91. John Baker, A short preparation to the worthy receiving of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. (1)
- 92. John Bernard, The independents catechisme. (1)
- 93. Immanuel Bourne, A light from Christ. (3)
- 94. William Goode, A new catechisme. (2)
- 95. Henry Hammond, A practicall catechisme: Oxford. (14)
- 96. J.K., A catechisme for the times. (1)
- 97. William More, A short and plain tractate of the Lord's Supper. (1)
- 98. John Owen, Two short catechisms. (2)

1646

- 99. Robert Abbot, Milk for babes, or a mother's catechism for her children. (1)
- 100. Anonymous, A short catechisme or the examination of communicants. (3)

101. J.B., A short catechisme composed according to the rules and directions of the Parliament. (1)
 102. John Ball, A short catechisme. (2)
 103. Dorothy Burch, A catechism of the several heads of Christian religion. (1)
 104. J.K., A scripture catechism. (1)
 105. . Scripture security for conscience. (1)
 106. Thomas Wolfall, Childrens bread. (1)

1647

107. Anonymous, *A short treatise contayning all the principall grounds of Christian religion. (2)
 108. Samuel Austin, A practical catechism. (1)
 109. John Gere, A catechisme in brief questions. (1)
 110. The humble advice of the Assembly of Divines sitting at Westminster concerning a larger and shorter catechisme. (Successive editions of the Larger Catechism are denoted by the initials L.C.)
 111. Obadiah Sedgewick, A short catechism. (1)
 112. The humble advice of the Assembly of Divines, now by authority of Parliament, sitting at Westminster, concerning a shorter catechism. (Successive editions of the Shorter Catechism are denoted by the initials S.C.)

1648

113. William Herbert, Careful father and pious child. (1)
L.C. (1)
 114. The rules and directions of the ordinance of Parliament concerning suspension from the Lord's Supper in case of ignorance, resolved into a short catechism. (1)
S.C. (2)
 115. John Wallis, *A brief and easie explanation of the shorter catechism. (8)

1649

116. Richard Hunt, A catechism of Christians. (3)
L.C. (3)
S.C. (4)

1650

William Ames, The chiefe heads of divinitie, a Latin translation. (Cf. catechism number 20)
L.C. (2)
S.C. (2)

1651

L.C. (1)
S.C. (3)

1652

117. Henry Jessey, A catechisme for babes. (1)
L.C. (2)
S.C. (3)

1653

118. Thomas Taylor, Certain catechistical exercises. (1)

1654

119. John Riddle, *A twofold catechism. (1)
 120. Christopher Love, "The sum of practical divinity. (1)
S.C. (1)
 121. John Warren, *Principles of Christian doctrine. (3)

1655

122. Richard Baxter, The Quakers catechism. (3)
L.C. (1)
 123. Robert Ram, The countrymans catechisme. (1)

1656

124. *The agreement of divers ministers of Christ in the county of Worcester.
 125. Zachary Crofton, Catechizing Gods ordinance. (2)
 126. Simon Ford, A sermon on catechizing. (1)
 127. Thomas Greaves, *A brief summe of Christian religion. (1)
L.C. (2)
S.C. (7)

1657

128. John Ball, A short catechisme to prepare young ignorant people: Oxford. (1)
 129. Charles Broxolme, The good old way: or Perkins improved. (2)
 130. Simon Ford, A short catechism. (1)
 William Gouge, A short catechisme, a Welsh translation.
 (Cf. catechism number 27)
L.C. (1)
S.C. (2)

1658

131. Joseph Alleine, *A most familiar explanation of the Assemblies shorter catechism. (4)
 132. Thomas Hodges, A scripture catechisme. (1)
L.C. (5)
S.C. (5)

1659

133. Anonymous, A catechism for souldiers. (1)
 134. Anonymous, *A short catechism. (1)
 135. John Davenport and William Hooke, *A catechism containing the chief heads of Christian religion. (1)
 136. John Tombes, A short catechism about baptism. (1)
S.C., a Greek translation.
S.C., a Latin translation.
S.C., a Welsh translation.

1660

137. Edward Bury, A short catechisme containing the fundamental points of religion. (1)

L.C. (1)
S.C. (4)

1662

138. L.C. (1)
Thomas Lye, *An abridgement of the late reverend Assemblies shorter catechism. (2)

139. _____. A plain and familiar method of instructing the younger sort according to the lesser catechism. (4)

S.C. (2)

1664

140. Zachary Cawdrey, *A brief and methodical catechism. (1)

141. Benjamin Keach, *The child's instructor. (2)

S.C., a Welsh translation.

1665

142. John Goodwin, A catechism, or principle heads of the Christian religion. (1)

1667

- S.C. (1)
143. S.W., *A short and plain explication of the shorter catechism. (1)

1668

144. Thomas Gouge, *The principles of Christian religion. (6)

1669

L.C. (1)
S.C. (1)

1670

145. John Bartlet, *The practical Christian. (1)

1671

146. Anonymous, A short catechism. (1)

L.C. (1)
S.C. (1)

1672

147. Thomas Lye, *The Assemblies shorter catechism. (2)

148. Owen Stockton, A scriptural catechism. (1)

1673

149. Robert Barclay, A catechism and confession of faith. (5)

150. Thomas Doolittle, *The young man's instructor, and the old man's remembrancer. (1)

151. Thomas Vincent, *An explicatory catechism. (9)
 152. John Worthington, *A form of sound words: or, a scriptural catechism. (7)

1674

153. Richard Baxter, The poor man's family book. (6)
 154. Stephen Scandrett, Doctrine and instruction. (1)

1675

155. Thomas Adams, *The main principles of Christian religion. (2)
 156. Anonymous, *An explicatory catechism. (1)
 157. John Bunyan, Instruction for the ignorant. (1)
L.C. (1)
 158. Thomas Lye, *An explanation of the shorter catechism. (5)
S.C. (2)

1676

159. Edward Bowles, *A plain and short catechism, eighth edition. (8)
 160. R.E., *A scriptural catechism. (3)
 Thomas Gouge, The principles of Christian religion, a Welsh translation. (Cf. catechism number 141)
 161. John Horne, A catechism. (1)
 162. Thomas Wadsworth, Short catechism of twelve questions. (1)

1677

S.C. (1)

1679

- S.C. (1)
S.C., a Welsh translation.
 163. Nathaniel Vincent, *The little childe's catechism. (2)

1680

S.C. (1)

1682

164. Anonymous, *A key to catechisms. (1)
S.C. (1)

1683

165. Richard Baxter, The catechizing of families. (1)

1687

L.C. (1)
S.C. (2)

1688

166. Anonymous, *Catechism made practical. (1)
 167. Thomas Doolittle, Catechism made practical. (1)
L.C. (2)
S.C. (4)

1689

168. Anonymous, *A short explanation of the shorter catechism.

(2)

L.C. (1)S.C. (1)S.C., a Hebrew translation.

1691

169. Richard Baxter, A mother's catechism.

S.C. (1)S.C., a Welsh translation.

170. Nathaniel Vincent, *The principles of the doctrine of Christ. (1)

1692

171. Anonymous, *The communicant's instructor. (1)

172. Thomas Doolittle, Catechizing necessary for the ignorant. (1)

173. Clement Ellis, *The lambs of Christ fed with the sincere milk of the word. (2)

174. John Flavell, *An exposition of the Assemblies catechism.

(3)

S.C. (1)

175. Thomas Watson, *A body of practical divinity. (1)

1693

L.C. (1)S.C. (2)

1695

176. Samuel Angier, *A short explanation of the shorter catechism, second edition. (2).

1698

177. Thomas Doolittle, *A plain method of catechizing. (4)

S.C., a Greek translation.

1699

178. John Clifford, *Sound words: or, the catechism compos'd by the reverend divines assembled at Westminster. (1)

S.C. (1)

1700

179. Isaac Chauncey, *The doctrine which is according to godliness grounded upon the Holy Scripture of truth. (1)

180. George Day, The communicant's instructor. (1)

181. Benjamin Keach, The covenant and catechism of the church of Christ. (1)

182. Matthew Henry, *A catechism for children. (1)

1702

183. Matthew Henry, *A scripture catechism in the method of the Assembly's. (3)